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# **THE RED SEA CROSSING AND CHRISTIAN BAPTISM**

## **A STUDY IN TYPOLOGY AND LITURGY**

**ALASTAIR J. ROBERTS**

### **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this thesis is to present a case for the importance of typology, both in the relationship between Scripture and sacrament and for the inclusion of the Christian believer into the drama of redemption. I endeavour to demonstrate the theoretical possibility of an account of the operation and efficacy of baptism for which typology is integral. Exploring canonical and historical uses of the biblical narratives of Exodus and the Red Sea crossing, I give examples of the scriptural resources afforded to such an account and of the shapes that it might take.

In the opening chapter of the thesis, I build on the methodological foundation of Louis-Marie Chauvet's account of the symbolic efficacy of the sacraments, developing his position in a direction that places a greater accent upon temporality. Within my second chapter, I present a theological account and defence of typological hermeneutics.

In the two chapters that follow, I trace the contours of Exodus and Red Sea crossing typology within the Old and New Testaments.

Chapters 5 and 6 advance an integrated account of Scripture, the Church, the sacraments, and the body, drawing together the various threads of my argument to that point. I argue that typology provides a means by which we can mediate between elements of Christian faith and practice that are often disjointed.

In Chapter 7, I discuss the use of Red Sea crossing typology within baptismal liturgy and teaching in the first four centuries of the Church. I reflect critically upon the liturgical piety of the fourth and fifth centuries.

My final chapter employs the work of Charles Taylor to frame our current crisis of liturgical piety. I conclude that a recovery of typology provides us with invaluable resources with which to address the particular problems that Christian liturgy currently faces.

# **THE RED SEA CROSSING AND CHRISTIAN BAPTISM**

**A STUDY IN TYPOLOGY AND LITURGY**

**BY**

**ALASTAIR J. ROBERTS**

**SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**AT THE**

**UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM  
DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGION**

**2014**

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## **DECLARATION**

This work has been submitted to the University of Durham in accordance with the regulations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It is my own work, and none of it has been previously submitted to the University of Durham or in any other university for a degree.

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FOR MY FATHER

# 1

## AND THE WATERS WERE DIVIDED

### The Loss and Recovery of Symbol

#### *1. Divided Waters*

In treating baptism, Alexander Schmemmann laments the detachment of the dogmatic understanding of baptism from the form of the worship of the people of God, speaking of the creation of ‘a certain discrepancy between baptism itself—its liturgy, its texts, rites and symbols—on the one hand, and the various theological explanations and definitions of baptism on the other, between the act and the explanation, the sacrament and its comprehension.’<sup>1</sup> Although the baptismal symbolism of death and resurrection is still acknowledged, this symbolism has become severed from the ‘essence’ of the sacrament, creating a breach ‘between what is *done*—the liturgical rite—and what the Church believes to *happen*, to be accomplished by means of that “doing.”’<sup>2</sup>

In consequence of this breach, the integrity of the sacrament of baptism has been lost. The ‘essence’ of baptism is defined without regard to its ‘form’, which is relegated to functioning as a mere condition of its ‘validity’.<sup>3</sup> This is

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<sup>1</sup> Schmemmann 1974, 54

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 55

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 57

perhaps nowhere more clearly revealed than in the preoccupation with validity over essence or meaning in debates concerning the ‘form’ of baptism.<sup>4</sup>

Schmemmann contrasts this with the understanding of the early tradition, for which the form of baptism was regarded as ‘epiphanic’, revealing and fulfilling the essence, providing the means of its knowledge and explanation.<sup>5</sup> The claim that baptism is ‘in the *likeness* and *after the pattern* of Christ’s Death and Resurrection’ occupied a focal position for it.

In the early Church the terms “likeness” and “pattern” most obviously refer to the “form” of Baptism, i.e. to the immersion of the catechumen in water and his rising up from it. Yet it is this very form which manifests, communicates and fulfils the “essence,” is its very “epiphany,” so that the term “likeness,” being the description of the form, is at the same time the revelation of the “essence.” Baptism being performed “in the likeness” and “after the pattern” of death and resurrection therefore *is* death and resurrection. And the early Church, before she explains—if she explains them at all—the “why,” the “what,” and the “how” of this baptismal death and resurrection, simply knew that to follow Christ one must, at first, die and rise again with Him and in Him; that Christian life truly begins with an *event* in which, as in all glorious events, the very distinction between “form” and “essence” is but an irrelevant abstraction.<sup>6</sup>

The work of Jean Daniélou both brings the nature of this breach into further clarity and suggests means by which it might be addressed. Daniélou identifies the importance of biblical symbolism of the sacraments within the early tradition, symbolism that is essential to our understanding and valuing of their form. Daniélou argues that, because they have not truly been understood, the Church’s sacramental rites ‘often seem to the faithful to be artificial and sometimes even shocking.’<sup>7</sup> While the symbolic meaning of the sacraments has often been understood according to the natural significance of the elements or gestures employed—‘water washes, bread nourishes, oil heals’—Daniélou maintains that their true significance is found within biblical typology.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Schmemmann uses the word ‘form’ to refer to the shape of the liturgical rite that is performed, ‘essence’ to refer to what theology holds to be accomplished by the rite (ibid. 55).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 56

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 55-56

<sup>7</sup> Daniélou 1956, 4

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. 5-6

For Daniélou, typology operates according to the principle that ‘the realities of the Old Testament are figures of those of the New,’ a principle supported by the prophetic presentation of God’s future deliverance in terms of the pattern established by his past works.<sup>9</sup> Founded in the analogy between the events of sacred history, this ‘eschatological typology’ is realized not only in the person and work of Christ, but also of the Church.<sup>10</sup>

But these eschatological times are not only those of the life of Jesus, but of the Church as well. Consequently, the eschatological typology of the Old Testament is accomplished not only in the person of Christ, but also in the Church. Besides Christological typology, therefore, there exists a sacramental typology, and we find it in the New Testament. The Gospel of St. John shows us that the manna was a figure of the Eucharist; the first Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians that the crossing of the Red Sea was a figure of Baptism; the first Epistle of St. Peter that the Flood was also a figure of Baptism. This means, furthermore, that the sacraments carry on in our midst the *mirabilia*, the great works of God in the Old Testament and the New... In general, then, sacramental typology is only one form of typology of the theological analogy between the great moments of Sacred History.<sup>11</sup>

Daniélou proceeds to argue that, in addition to recognizing a typological relationship between the accomplished ‘reality’ of the sacraments and other great works of sacred history, we must also observe a theological analogy between the ‘visible sign’ of the sacramental rites and God’s works in the past.<sup>12</sup> Calling into question a popular tendency to look to Hellenistic culture for the origins of the sacraments, he argues for a source of sacramental symbolism beyond both this and the primal symbolism of natural elements.

[I]t is in studying the significance for the Old Testament of the different elements used in the sacraments that we have the best method of discovering their significance for Christ and for the Apostles. We shall possess a typology that will bear not only on the content of the sacraments, but also on their form; and this typology will show us that we are quite justified in seeing the sacraments as prefigured in the Old Testament, since it is for this reason that these particular signs were chosen by Christ.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid. 5

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. 5-6

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. 5

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 6

The relationship that Daniélou identifies between God's works in the past and his present activity in the sacraments is such that he speaks of them as 'the prolongation of the great works of God in the Old Testament and the New.'<sup>14</sup>

The detachment of the theology of baptism from its form and symbolism is treated somewhat differently in the work of Schmemmann and Daniélou. In Schmemmann's extended treatment of baptism in *Of Water and the Spirit*, as in his more abbreviated treatment in *For the Life of the World*, it is the concreteness of the actions of the baptismal liturgy that he reflects upon, and in terms of which he articulates his baptismal theology.<sup>15</sup> What results is an elegant and often compelling representation of the symbolism of the rite, yet one always at risk of deracination, as its roots in biblical symbolism and, more particularly, typology are relatively shallow. By contrast, in Daniélou's treatment, a far more effective triangulation of our baptismal understanding in terms of liturgy, theology, and Scripture is accomplished. The scriptural pole, somewhat muted in Schmemmann, is a more powerful presence.

Yet problems remain in Daniélou's approach. The first of these problems, which we will visit in the next chapter, is a weakness within his definition of typology. The second problem is the sign-cause framework in terms of which he operates. In the opening paragraph of the introduction of *The Bible and the Liturgy* he presents us with a sign-cause distinction:

Theology defines the sacraments as "efficacious signs,"—this being the sense of the scholastic saying (*significando causant*). But, as things are today, our modern textbooks insist almost exclusively on the first term of this definition. We study the efficacious causality of the sacraments, but we pay very little attention to their nature as *signs*. It is, therefore, to this aspect of the sacraments in particular that the chapters of this book will be devoted.<sup>16</sup>

Daniélou's salutary attempt to recover the symbolic and typological dimension of the sacraments is hamstrung at the very outset by his adoption of this framework. Even though he laments the excessive focus on one dimension of the definition (causality), this recovery continues to be framed by the

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid. 17

<sup>15</sup> Schmemmann 1973, 67-79; Schmemmann 1974

<sup>16</sup> Daniélou 1956, 3



heterogeneity inherent in the theological definition of the sacraments as ‘efficacious signs’. In consequence of this, the importance of the symbolic dimension of the sacraments cannot be fully realized within his theology.

Schmemmann’s treatments of sacramental efficacy are not framed by the same sign-cause opposition. In his most mature and developed presentation of his understanding of sacramental efficacy in *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, he laments the ‘disintegration, in Christian consciousness, of the key concept of *symbol*, its contraposition to the concept of *reality* and thus its reduction to the category of “illustrative symbolism.”’<sup>17</sup> Schmemmann maintains a far more ‘organic’ relationship between symbol and reality: a symbol is not merely a representation, resemblance, illustration, or external indication of a reality, but it *participates* in, *manifests*, and—by virtue of those facts—can *communicate* the reality.

[T]he difference (and it is a radical one) between our contemporary understanding of the symbol and the original one consists in the fact that while today we understand the symbol as the representation or sign of an *absent* reality, something that is not really in the sign itself (just as there is no real, actual water in the chemical symbol H<sub>2</sub>O), in the original understanding it is the manifestation and presence of the *other* reality—but precisely as other, which, under given circumstances, cannot be manifested and made present in any other way than as a symbol.<sup>18</sup>

In what might be for some a surprising move, Schmemmann argues that faith itself has a symbolic character, as the ‘evidence of things unseen’, participating in and manifesting a reality beyond the empirical.<sup>19</sup> Symbol is ‘inseparable from faith’, both presupposing it and being necessary for it: ‘unlike “convictions,” philosophical “points of view,” etc., faith certainly is contact and a thirst for contact, embodiment and a thirst for embodiment: it is the manifestation, the presence, the operation of one reality within the other.’<sup>20</sup> By this means, in a move of understated importance, Schmemmann demonstrates that faith is of one piece with the symbol, rather than something that stands over against it.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Schmemmann 1987, 37

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. 38

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. 39

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Within Schmemmann’s account of baptism, such an understanding of the relationship between faith and symbol is part of the means by which he can maintain that baptism is the manifestation

He describes symbol:

In it—unlike in a simple “illustration,” simple sign, and even in the sacrament in its scholastic-rationalistic “reduction”—the empirical (or “visible”) and the spiritual (or “invisible”) are united not *logically* (this “stands for” that), nor *analogically* (this “illustrates” that), nor yet by *cause and effect* (this is the “means” or “generator” of that), but *epiphanically*. One reality *manifests* (επιφαίνω) and *communicates* the other, but—and this is immensely important—only to the degree to which the symbol itself is a participant in the spiritual reality and is able or called upon to embody it. In other words, in the symbol *everything* manifests the spiritual reality, but *not* everything pertaining to the spiritual reality appears embodied in the symbol.<sup>22</sup>

This ‘epiphanic’ understanding of the sacrament provides a much more promising conceptual framework for a recovery of the importance of baptismal typology. Daniélou’s vision of the liturgy, and the biblical typology that lies at its heart, can be far more fully realized when we abandon the sign-cause distinction that structures his treatment.

## ***2. Through Divided Waters***

It is in such questions regarding the relationship between sacrament, symbol, typology, and theology that my project finds its genesis. Both Schmemmann and Daniélou identify serious problems that afflict many understandings of the sacraments, ways in which primary sources for our treatment of the sacraments have been neglected. Schmemmann highlights the detachment of the dogmatic understanding of baptism from the *form of the liturgy*. Daniélou highlights the detachment of the dogmatic understanding of baptism from *biblical typology*. These two breaches in our understanding of baptism have occasioned a general impoverishment of our theology of the sacrament.

Yet, in diagnosing the detachment of our dogmatic theology of baptism from these sources, we have taken the first step towards a recovery of a richer account of the sacrament. The projects of Schmemmann and Daniélou both hold

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of and our participation in the gift of *Christ’s own faith* (Schmemmann 1974, 66-70). Not only does this disrupt the thoroughgoing individualization of faith, it also undermines the subject-object opposition between person and sacrament that is typically its correlate.

<sup>22</sup> Schmemmann 1987, 39

considerable promise, yet both in their own ways are limited or hamstrung by their areas of neglect or the constricting frameworks within which they operate.

The goal of this thesis is to move beyond both Schmemmann and Daniélou, towards an articulation of the theology of baptism that overcomes the two breaches that they identify and which also addresses some of the deficiencies within the accounts that they offer us. This thesis does not present a comprehensive account of baptism. Rather, it is an attempt to imagine some of the ways in which our theology and practice of baptism might be transformed were it to realize the promise of these visions. I aim to achieve this by focusing closely upon one dimension of baptism's biblical typology in particular—the theme of Exodus. Through this single window, I hope to reveal a vast scriptural terrain for our sacramental theologies to reclaim.

In order to lay the foundation for a constructive account of the theology of baptism, I will be depending heavily upon concepts that are integral to the work of Schmemmann and Daniélou: symbol and typology. Both of these concepts are essential to my account of the sacrament, yet both require exploration beyond and alterations from that which Schmemmann and Daniélou afford us. The first two chapters of this thesis will principally be devoted to an extensive account of these concepts: the first primarily to the concept of symbol and the second to typology.

In discussing symbol, Louis-Marie Chauvet will be my principal interlocutor. In many respects, his work is seminal for the vision of baptism that I will be articulating in this thesis. I will expound and engage with his understanding in detail, as, with key adjustments, it will provide the theoretical backbone for the rest of this thesis.

The remainder of the thesis will be built upon the methodological and conceptual basis laid in these chapters. Moving from the more theoretical treatment of typology within my second chapter, my third chapter will discuss the importance of the themes and typology of Exodus within the New Testament. In the fourth chapter, I will relate these more directly to the theology and practice of baptism. I will argue that the New Testament treatment of baptism draws heavily upon Exodus typology, especially relating to the Red Sea and Jordan crossings. I will demonstrate some of the ways in which an appreciation of this typology can illuminate our theology of the sacrament.

The fifth and sixth chapters are an attempt to bring the symbolic form of the liturgy—Schmemmann's chief area of concern—into closer correspondence with and relation to the rite of baptism's typological and scriptural roots. I have already introduced Schmemmann's 'epiphanic' understanding of the liturgy: these chapters will discuss some of the ways in which the Exodus narrative can function within the liturgy so understood. One of the things that I hope to achieve within them is to show how an emphasis upon the symbolic form of the liturgy, such as that which is characteristic of Schmemmann's writing, is both congruent with and complemented by a deeply typological account of the sacrament.

Within the seventh chapter, I reflect upon ways in which the typology of Exodus and the Red Sea crossing informs the symbolism of baptismal rituals within the early Church, especially of the fourth and fifth centuries. I hope to demonstrate significant continuity between my project and the understandings of baptism expressed in their writings, while criticizing aspects of their liturgical piety. This thesis is, in large measure, an attempt to provide a theoretical basis for a position with many resemblances to an early Church understanding and practice of the sacraments.

### ***3. Towards a Recovery of Symbol***

Now that we have a clearer apprehension of where this work is headed, I wish to return to the issue that immediately faces us: how exactly to escape the sign-cause opposition that hampers Daniélou's approach and present a theoretical basis for and elaboration of the more felicitous category of symbol that informs Schmemmann's treatment. When the heterogeneity between sign and cause is introduced into our very definition of the sacraments, sacramental efficacy and theology start to float free of typology and ritual, even on those occasions when the latter pair is explored in much detail. At this juncture, the work of Louis-Marie Chauvet can be of considerable help.

Chauvet takes up the issue of the heterogeneity of sign and cause in the definition of the sacraments in *Symbol and Sacrament*. He begins with the question of why the Scholastics privileged the category of 'cause' when thinking about the divine grace involved in the sacraments. He suggests that they thought in this way because, given the metaphysical presuppositions of their culture, they

could not do otherwise.<sup>23</sup> While appreciating that their language was not always apt to the reality it sought to describe and occasionally reflecting on the disparity between the two, the Scholastics never took this disparity ‘as a point of departure and as a framework’ for their thought.<sup>24</sup> Chauvet argues that there is a way of ‘starting from and remaining within this disparity’, as we start with language, or the ‘symbolic’.<sup>25</sup>

Even for Thomas Aquinas, who sought to privilege sign over causality, the only conceivable mode by which the sacraments could convey what they signify was through the mode of causality, which is why the model of the ‘instrument’ dominates his thinking.<sup>26</sup> Despite frequent qualifications, and his recognition that the model is only an analogy, this ‘technical model of cause and effect’ exerts a considerable influence over his entire approach.<sup>27</sup>

As we see in the case of Aquinas, an understanding of the sacraments that admits the heterogeneity of sign and cause does not necessarily subordinate their signifying function to their causal role or preclude a robust acknowledgment of their importance as signs. Both Aquinas and Daniélou emphasize the importance of the signifying role of the sacraments, yet both are ultimately thrown back upon the productionist category of cause when they have to account for the sacraments’ efficacy. Chauvet attempts to overcome this problem through a Heideggerian account of language and the use of the category of ‘symbol’.

Following Martin Heidegger, Chauvet speaks of the ‘forgetting of the “ontological difference”’ or ‘the difference between being and entities’ in traditional metaphysics.<sup>28</sup> For Heidegger being is not an entity, nor is it like an entity.

“Being” is neither God nor a foundation for the world. Being is more distant than any entity and at the same time closer to humans than any entity.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Chauvet 1995, 8

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. 9

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. 21

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. 22

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. 26

<sup>29</sup> Heidegger, cited in Ibid. 48. See also Heidegger 1962, 26.

Being is not a genus. Being cannot be contained, calculated, or defined. Like a gift, being ‘at once bestows and withholds itself.’<sup>30</sup> Being should be distinguished from beings, and is not itself a being. This is what Heidegger means when he speaks of the ‘ontological difference’. Being is that to which the word ‘is’ refers, a reality of which we can have a meaningful understanding, without being able to articulate it in conceptual terms. If this ‘being’ keeps slipping through our fingers, this is only natural, for being is no ‘thing’. Rather being is known in the event of self-disclosure or ‘presencing’.

Being is known in and as a play of presence and absence. Being is the ‘Event which uncovers’: the entity is the ‘Arrival which takes cover.’<sup>31</sup> This ‘ontological difference’ is sustained in a relationship between its terms, the ‘essence of being’ being ‘the Play itself.’<sup>32</sup> Every event of disclosure and arrival involves a simultaneous movement of veiling and retreat. What Heidegger means here could perhaps be illustrated by the manner in which the being of a silver chalice is revealed in the context of the celebration of the Eucharist.<sup>33</sup> In this ‘presencing’ of the chalice there is also a veiling, as the aspect of the chalice as a work of artistic metalwork (or as an object with a peculiar historical significance or provenance) is partially veiled. Conversely, it is the artistic or historic character of the chalice that is disclosed as it is placed on a pedestal within a glass cabinet, while its Eucharistic function is veiled.<sup>34</sup> No single form of presencing exhausts the being of the chalice. As one aspect is cast into relief, another is thrown into shadow.

Metaphysics loses sight of this constant play of being in presence and absence, light and shadow, asserting a solid presence and permanent foundation in its place. The being of the chalice is no longer encountered in a dance of arrival and retreat, but is regarded in terms of a pure presence. Being is treated as though it were a solidly present entity itself, a fixed substratum underlying all else, rather than as something that is open. Grasping the relationship and difference between

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<sup>30</sup> Chauvet 1995, 49

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. 50

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Heidegger uses the example of a silver chalice to discuss the four Aristotelian causes and the revealing purpose of technology (Heidegger 2003, 281ff.). The four causes are ways of jointly being responsible for bringing something forth (*poiesis*). It is this ‘bringing forth’ that is the fundamental truth beyond the plurality of causes.

<sup>34</sup> This illustration has bearing upon the points that I will make about autonomous art in a secular age in the conclusion of this thesis.

the play of being and the existence of beings is crucial for understanding Heidegger's thought. The category of 'gift' is useful for understanding being as that which 'at once bestows and withholds itself.'<sup>35</sup>

By contrast, for traditional metaphysics, according to Heidegger, being is the universal substrate and final term concealed beneath every entity. This notion of being leads to a preoccupation with some 'foundational being', which provides the ground for all others, often identified as God.<sup>36</sup> Individual entities are related to this foundational being by means of analogy—the analogy of being (*analogia entis*)—in a hierarchical order akin to the pyramid's ascension to its summit.<sup>37</sup>

The fate of language within this metaphysical approach is to be reduced in status to a representation of the realm of being, which stands over against it. This 'rupture' between being and language means that language is no longer, as it was for the pre-Socratics, seen to be 'the heart of the real', the place where nature bursts forth, and 'where the world happens', but is reduced to a pale reflection of the realm of being.<sup>38</sup>

Being is identified with absolute presence beyond language, while language is by its very nature an unreliable translator, with meaning spilling like water through the crooked fingers of its cupped hands. In an ideal world we would not use the clumsy instrument of language (or the body) at all, but would communicate 'immediately' like angels are supposed to, mental idea to mental idea.<sup>39</sup> Language is conceived of as an obstacle, which we must bear with as an aspect of our imprisoned state in the realm of the sensible, and because no more exalted means of communication is afforded to us. Mediation is an unwelcome reality, an obfuscating veil preventing our direct engagement with the final term of 'being'.

Within this understanding, being cannot be located and caught up within the 'hurly-burly' of human activity and language (to borrow an expression from Wittgenstein<sup>40</sup>). Descartes and others within this tradition are forgetful of the fact that persons are always implicated within the very language that they speak: our

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<sup>35</sup> Chauvet 1995, 49

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. 27

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. 29

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Wittgenstein 1980, 108e

language possesses us as much as we possess it.<sup>41</sup> We do not utter judgments upon reality from a position of detachment, but rather negotiate a language that orders a universe into a structured ‘world’, a world in which we always already find ourselves, and by which we ourselves are ordered (in Heideggerian thought a ‘world’ is an organized form of being or way of life, akin to the way we speak of the ‘Roman world’, the ‘world of politics’, or the personal ‘world’ in which I operate, and should be distinguished from the concept of the ‘universe’ as the totality of things<sup>42</sup>).

In this paradigm—one which is common both to nominalism and to the realism of such as Aquinas—words are the signs of ideas, and ideas are the likeness of things. The linguistic signifier is bound to the signified idea in a purely conventional relationship. Language is nothing more than an ‘*instrumental intermediary*’ between being and humans: it is no longer ‘the *meeting place* where being and humankind mutually stepped forward toward one another’.<sup>43</sup>

The language-being dualism affects our understanding of the sacraments. ‘Language’—the signifying function of the sacraments—comes to stand over against ‘being’—the causal function of the sacraments. Aquinas, as a realist, wishes to maintain that language can be a faithful intermediary between us and being. Consequently, the sacraments do effectively signify the reality that they cause. Daniélou’s statements concerning the signifying function of the sacraments are similar in their force:<sup>44</sup> as ‘signs’ the sacraments are true representations of the reality, a point related to his concern to maintain that his typology bears upon not only the *content*, but also the *form* of the sacraments.<sup>45</sup> However, even in such cases the underlying dualism between language and being is maintained.

Catherine Pickstock expresses the problem forcefully:

If this epistemological coincidence of the mystical and the real becomes fissured, the Eucharistic signs perforce become either a matter of

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<sup>41</sup> Chauvet 1995, 36

<sup>42</sup> Heidegger’s world-universe distinction has been clarified for me by Hubert Dreyfus (1991, 89-90).

<sup>43</sup> Chauvet 1995, 33

<sup>44</sup> ‘[T]he sacraments present two aspects. First, there is the reality already accomplished, and this reality is in continuity with the works of God in the two Testaments. But there is also the visible sign,—water, bread, oil, baptizing, feasting, anointing—by means of which the action of God operates.’ Daniélou 1956, 6.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.



non-essential, *illustrative* signification which relies upon a non-participatory similitude between the bread and the Body, and the wine and the Blood, or else, in dissociation from the realization of the Church, an extrinsicist miracle which stresses the alienness of bread from Body, and wine from Blood. These alternatives, in disconnecting the symbolic from the real, in an attempt to prioritize either one or the other, are both equally reducible to a synchronic mode of presence which fails to allow the sacramental mystery its full, temporally ecstatic potential within the action of the Church.<sup>46</sup>

The language-being dualism explains much of the neglect of typology in baptismal theology. Situated on the language side of the dualism, baptismal types seem to place baptism within a play of typological signs and signifying events, rather than referring it directly to being. The efficacy of baptism is independent of its character as a sign, even when the latter is believed to give us a greater imaginative purchase upon the former. A genuine valorization of baptismal typology is unlikely to occur where sign or symbol are held in low regard.

The dualism also affects our understanding of ‘grace’ in its relationship to the sacraments. Within the sign-cause duality, grace is typically assigned to the ‘cause’ side of the equation. Yet a ‘productionist’ representation of grace is ill-suited to representing what is, in the final analysis, a divine disposition of favour towards us and the benefits that are granted to us on this account and which accrue to us from it. Such a mode of understanding does not do justice to the *otherness* of grace, to the way that grace is beyond measure or value, subjecting it to an immanentistic and totalizing logic.

Chauvet argues that, while ‘symbol’ is ‘the way of the non-value because it is the way of the never-finished reversible exchange in which every subject comes to be,’ such an approach contravenes the principles of the metaphysical tradition, which only admits the logic of ‘a *first cause* and of an *absolute foundation* for the totality of existents; that of a *center* playing the role of a fixed point; that of a *presence*, faultless, constant, and stable.’<sup>47</sup> Symbol, being without such limits, and not coming to a settled rest in a final term, cannot be rendered congruent to such a paradigm. As such, symbol is a more appropriate category in terms of which to understand the grace of the sacraments. Within the metaphysical tradition, grace is imprisoned within a ‘logic of the Same’, which

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<sup>46</sup> Pickstock 1998, 254-255

<sup>47</sup> Chauvet 1995, 44

prevents its true character as something exceeding the realm of measure and value from being appreciated.<sup>48</sup>

This concern to avoid domesticating the sacraments to such a ‘logic of the Same’ is powerfully in evidence in Schmemmann’s understanding of ‘symbol’:

[I]n its outward appearance, in the time of “this world,” the liturgy is a *symbol* and is expressed in *symbols*—but “symbol” in the meaning of which we spoke in the beginning of this book, where we termed a symbol a reality that cannot be expressed or manifested in the categories of “this world,” i.e., to the senses, empirically, visibly. It is the reality that elsewhere we termed the *sacramentality* inherent in everything created by God...

Thus it is impossible to explain and define the symbol. It is realized or “actualized” in its *own* reality through its transformation into that to which it points and witnesses, of which it is a symbol. But this conversion remains invisible, for it is accomplished by the Holy Spirit, in the new time, and is certified only by *faith*.<sup>49</sup>

Schmemmann’s treatment of the symbol is driven by a deep concern to maintain the reality of transcendence—of the sacramentality of God’s creation<sup>50</sup>—and to avoid circumscribing an ever-arriving *gift* into a circumscribable *given*. The ‘symbol’, for Schmemmann, is primarily a *theological* category. This is less clearly apparent in Chauvet. As Chauvet’s account takes its starting point in philosophical and anthropological categories, rather than in theological ones, the theological grounds of his account of symbol, being, and language are often rather muted. In many respects, one might, in contrasting it to Schmemmann’s approach, characterize it as a sacramentology ‘from below’.

Chauvet’s account of grace and the sacraments does not straightforwardly accommodate it to the philosophical understanding of Heidegger. Rather, he argues for a ‘homology of attitude’ between the theological task and that described by Heidegger in relation to being.<sup>51</sup> Theologians, like those who think about being, are ‘not outside their work,’ but ‘give witness to that in which they know themselves to be already held.’<sup>52</sup> Theology begins and proceeds, not by

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<sup>48</sup> Chauvet 1995, 44

<sup>49</sup> Schmemmann 1987, 222. Also, ‘in the symbol *everything* manifests the spiritual reality, but *not* everything pertaining to the spiritual reality appears embodied in the symbol’ Ibid. 39.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. 61

<sup>51</sup> Chauvet 1995, 74

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. 65

some scientific knowledge, but through openness to the realm of relationships with God and others within the Church.<sup>53</sup>

In a significant statement, Chauvet maintains that grace and being are alike in many respects:

Dwelling in the symbolic order, grace seems at one and the same time *gratuitous*, that is, always preceding and necessitated by nothing, and *gracious*, that is, irreducible to any demand for justification—thus to any “value” (conceptual, physical, moral...). The generosity of Being Heidegger speaks of (*es gibt Sein*) echoes grace. Being and grace are homologous because the way to them, “which sets everything on the way, sets everything on the way inasmuch as this way speaks” and is thus “transitive” and is the attitude of the subject in both cases: an attitude of listening and welcome toward something *ungraspable* by which we are already grasped; a gracious attitude of “*letting be*” and “*allowing oneself to be spoken*” which requires us to renounce all ambition for mastery.<sup>54</sup>

Chauvet’s account of the homology between grace and being and between the attitude of the theologian and the Heideggerian philosopher does not entirely satisfy me. I am troubled by the failure of Chauvet’s account sufficiently to contrast grace with Heideggerian being, to present its unique character. More particularly, I believe that we need to give grace a conceptual priority that will dramatically condition our understanding of ‘being’.

Taken by itself, it is not clear that Heidegger’s being exceeds a mere Dionysian flux and that difference, as it functions within Heidegger and his philosophical progeny, avoids reducing all difference to penultimacy before an ultimate nihilistic indifference, subjecting all to futility. Pickstock challenges the manner in which Derrida and Heidegger make death decisive of life, suggesting that it has much in common with a pagan understanding.<sup>55</sup> Heidegger’s emphasis on ‘being-towards-death’ and denial of any ontological significance to the immortality of the soul is profoundly problematic:

[H]is argument enlists a deliberately spatial reading of eternity as simply the remaining in existence of a being, whereas one could think of immortal life in ontological terms, as the participation of a being in Being as such, regarding Being therefore as an eternal plenitude rather than as

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid. 66

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. 446

<sup>55</sup> Pickstock 1998, 112

time, death, and nothingness. Such a plenitude would mean that reality could be approached in an optative mood of desire, hope, or faith, rather than Heidegger's cognitive preference for nothingness as the only disclosure of Being, which—since the “nothing” is the superlative object which can be known with security—remains an indicative reading.<sup>56</sup>

I have employed the category of ‘gift’ in describing the operations of being. However, once again, we should beware of eliding the Heideggerian and Christian uses of such a term. While being and language may naturally function in a gift-like fashion, this ought not to be confused, conflated, or too closely aligned with the gift of divine grace. Chauvet is in danger of doing just this in his remarks on the similarity of grace and being above. In doing so we might be at risk of confusing metaphor for homology. Grace, unlike being's ‘gratuitousness’, is the activity of a person.

Articulating a properly *theological* grounding for our account of symbol is necessary if we are to save being from subjection to the ‘necrophiliac’ and nihilistic indifference that Pickstock regards as characteristic of Derrida and Heidegger. For this, we need strong doctrines of creation and resurrection, upholding the ultimacy of life and peace over death and violence. Furthermore, we must resist the temptation of too close an alignment between the Heideggerian understanding of the gratuitousness of being and the Christian belief in the character of creation as a divine gift.

Schmemmann writes:

The natural dependence of man upon the world was intended to be transformed constantly into communion with God in whom is all life. Man was to be the priest of a eucharist, offering the world to God, and in this offering he was to receive the gift of life. But in the fallen world man does not have the priestly power to do this. His dependence on the world becomes a closed circuit, and his love is deviated from its true direction. He still loves, he is still hungry. He knows he is dependent on that which is beyond him. But his love and his dependence refer only to the world in itself....

When we see the world as an end in itself, everything becomes itself a value and consequently loses all value, because only in God is found the meaning (value) of everything, and the world is meaningful only when it is the “sacrament” of God's presence.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid. 113. Zizioulas 2006, 45 claims that Heidegger's philosophy ‘deprives the Other of a *constitutive* role in ontology.’

<sup>57</sup> Schmemmann 1973, 17

Schmemmann here distinguishes between a truncated, sterile, and ultimately tragic dependence upon the gratuity of the ‘given’ of nature and the apprehension of the world as a constantly arriving divine gift in which fellowship can be enjoyed as it is offered back to God. Such a distinction is muted in Chauvet and a sufficiently robust presentation of the gift character of creation is lacking. Consequently, the sacramental symbol’s openness to the arrival of a genuinely transcendent and transformative gift, one bursting the wineskins of our mundane categories, becomes obscured.<sup>58</sup>

While Chauvet employs the more general categories of symbol and gift in order to understand the specific character of the sacraments and the liturgy, within Schmemmann and Pickstock this order is reversed: the sacraments and the liturgy provide the realm within which our relationship to all of reality is transformed.<sup>59</sup> The ‘sacramental’ character of creation is restored within this realm, manifesting the continual gracious arrival of the creation in the form of divine gift, beyond control, fetishization, or circumscription. Through faith and symbol we experience the openness of the creation to a transcendent divine plenitude of life and peace, simultaneously radically other and intimate to us.

Pierre Gisel cautions:

[T]he properly theological limit of the symbolic enterprise holds the risk of dissolving theology into anthropology by not emphasizing enough that if the sacramental effectively falls within the jurisdiction of the symbolic register, all the symbolic nevertheless is not sacramental.<sup>60</sup>

It is not Chauvet’s intention—and this is a point of crucial importance—to reduce theology to a form of anthropology, by reducing divine grace to the ‘socio-linguistic process’.

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<sup>58</sup> I would also suggest that the role of the Spirit in constituting the sacraments in particular and the creation more generally as ‘sacramental’ is in danger of neglect here. We will return to the Spirit at a later point.

<sup>59</sup> Pickstock goes so far as to argue that transubstantiation is the ‘condition of possibility for all meaning’ (Pickstock 1998, 261). She criticizes Jean-Luc Marion for according ‘special extra-linguistic privilege to the Eucharist event,’ maintaining that this move on his part is motivated by an assumption of the ‘deathliness of language’ (ibid. 256, 262).

<sup>60</sup> Cited in Bordeyne & Morrill 2008, 1906.

We must say, then, that “sacramental grace” is an extra-linguistic reality, but with this distinction, in its Christian form it is comprehensible only on the (intra-linguistic) model of the filial and brotherly and sisterly alliance established, *outside of us* (*extra nos*), in Christ. Despite grammar, which should never be taken at face value, “grace” designates not an object we receive, but rather a symbolic work of *receiving oneself*: a work of “perlaboration” in the Spirit by which subjects receive themselves from God in Christ as sons and daughters, brothers and sisters.<sup>61</sup>

Chauvet is correct insofar as he insists that ‘although not reducible to an intra-linguistic symbolic performance, sacramental grace is still best thought of from this viewpoint.’<sup>62</sup> The problem arises in the failure adequately to emphasize the radical ambivalence of the concept of symbol apart from a theological account of reality. It is not symbol *as such* that will illuminate our understanding of the sacraments, but rather symbol *as it functions within a theological account of reality*. Once the ambivalence of the concept has been recognized and it has been stipulated that symbol be appropriated in terms of a broader theological account of reality, however, we can derive considerable benefit from Chauvet’s reflections.<sup>63</sup>

#### 4. Symbol

Chauvet argues that by rejecting the ‘onto-theology’ of traditional metaphysics and recasting sacramental theology within ‘the symbolic scheme of language, of culture, and of desire’, we will be in a position to ‘set up *a discourse from which the believing subject is inseparable*.’<sup>64</sup> In grasping truth, we are already grasped by it.

Earlier, I remarked upon the way that, within Schmemmann’s account of symbol, faith—and, by extension, the believing subject—is of one piece with symbol.<sup>65</sup> While the conceptual frameworks within which Schmemmann and Chauvet approach symbol may differ, Schmemmann’s being much more explicitly theological at root, there is a significant convergence of interests to be recognized here. Both approaches implicitly resist an opposition between the believing

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<sup>61</sup> Chauvet 1995, 140

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. 438

<sup>63</sup> Various other authors have raised concerns about Chauvet’s approach at this point. See Bordeyne & Morrill 2008, 195-196.

<sup>64</sup> Chauvet 1995, 43

<sup>65</sup> Schmemmann 1987, 39

person and the sacrament (along with understandings that would reduce the sacrament to a ‘mere’ sign of a disconnected grace). As symbols, the sacraments are ‘language acts making possible the unending transformation of subjects into believing subjects.’<sup>66</sup>

Humankind’s relationship to being should be appreciated in terms of language: ‘Language is the house of Being where humans live and thereby ex-sist, belonging as they do to the truth of Being over which they keep watch.’<sup>67</sup> For Heidegger, language ‘speaks’ us as much as we speak it, and being operates through its mediation. ‘Humans conduct themselves as if they were the masters of language, while in fact it is language that governs them.’<sup>68</sup> Humankind bears a unique relationship to being: the essence of humankind is ‘ec-static ex-sistence’ and, as an ‘ec-static breach’, humankind will always struggle to give account of itself in the metaphysical manner that it seeks to account for all else.<sup>69</sup>

Being comes into presence through language. Words are not mere handles upon reality, or tools for our expression, but ‘summon’ being.<sup>70</sup> Although our words have the instrumental purpose of designating reality in a manner that enables us to act upon it and manipulate it, there is a far more fundamental aspect to language, something which we commonly forget. This aspect is not merely held alongside the utilitarian purpose of language, but belongs to a completely ‘different level,’ one that is most clearly operative in poetry.<sup>71</sup>

Most especially in poetry, we experience the openness of being in language: the *poietic* ‘makes’ the world.<sup>72</sup> We are all constituted by the ‘speech’ of being and we summon being to come-to-presence as we speak: we are summoned by being and we summon being.

As human beings, we do not ‘possess language’, but are ‘possessed by it’.<sup>73</sup> We come into being in a universe that has always already been spoken into a ‘world’ (in the sense described above).<sup>74</sup> Only within the context of this ‘world’ can things truly ‘come-to-presence’. Language summons things into presence, yet

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<sup>66</sup> Chauvet 1995, 45

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. 50

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. 55

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. 49

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. 56

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. 57

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

this ‘coming-into-presence’ is always marked by absence.<sup>75</sup> It is a ‘trace’, not a presence that we can circumscribe, master, or fetishize: it cannot be grasped onto, as it melts away as soon as we seek to do so.<sup>76</sup>

Reality always comes to us in a mediated form, being constructed by the symbolic order:

This *symbolic order* designates the system of connections between the different elements and levels of a culture (economic, social, political, ideological—ethics, philosophy, religion...), a system forming a coherent whole that allows the social group and individual to orient themselves in space, find their place in time, and in general situate themselves in the world in a significant way—in short, to find their identity in a world that makes “sense”...<sup>77</sup>

I earlier distinguished between a ‘universe’ and a ‘world’: it is the symbolic order that Chauvet describes here that renders the universe as a ‘world’ to us.

Submersion within this symbolic order, this law, this world of meaning, is the means by which the human subject is formed.<sup>78</sup> We form ourselves by building this symbolic world. However, the symbolic world is something inherited from others: we enter into a world that has already been spoken. Chauvet compares this symbolic world to a set of building blocks—they are the means by which we form ourselves, and the real into a ‘world’—and to contact lenses, which, although invisible to us while we are wearing them, filter all that we see.<sup>79</sup>

Language (which does not exhaust the symbolic world) participates in the characteristics of the symbolic order, within which it plays a crucial part. Language always precedes us. It is not an instrument, but *mediates* reality to us.<sup>80</sup> It is constitutive of truly human experience: language is our primary means of

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid. 58

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. 84

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. 86

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. The limitation in both of these analogies is that they do not quite capture the way in which *we ourselves* are constructed through this symbolic world. To capture something of this difference in the context of identity, Judith Butler employs the category of ‘performativity’ (as distinct from ‘performance’, which presupposes a pre-existing performer). She defines this as the ‘reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains’ (Butler 1993, 2). Our identity is ‘always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed’ (Butler 2006, 34).

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. 87



perception. Even when we are silent, our language is always speaking in numerous ways, and we are its creations. If we were not possessed by language, our reality would not come-to-presence for us in the way that it does. Heidegger's approach to language runs radically directly contrary to that of traditional metaphysics, in which things precede words. For Heidegger, language creates 'things'.<sup>81</sup>

Mervyn Duffy writes of Chauvet's position here:

Chauvet is not denying the existence of the objective world, but rather asserting that human beings never know the world *as objective* alone... People always know the world *as it is for them*—the world for humans is the one *subjectively* experienced. As Robert Bellah comments: 'reality is seen to reside not just in the object but in the subject and particularly in the relation between subject and object'.<sup>82</sup>

There is a natural and tenacious misconception that language involves an 'exteriorization' and expression of something internal to us. Parallels between Wittgenstein and Heidegger are quite apparent at points such as this.<sup>83</sup> 'For *there is no human reality, however interior or intimate, except through the mediation of language or quasi-language that gives it a body by expressing it.*'<sup>84</sup> Our impressions and thoughts are given form and being by means of their expression. Without language, we could not think the thoughts that we want to express in the manner that we do.<sup>85</sup> Our concept of interiority develops out of the retrospective differentiation between the public expression and the private intention.<sup>86</sup> However, the two are inseparable: without chosen expressions, our intentions would be inchoate and indecipherable.

Some sort of language (in the broader sense of the term) is the mediator of every human reality. 'Every human situation, every experience common to several people wherever they may be, is a reality that, in its constitution, its advent, its realization, implies language. ... *Every human reality has language for its catalyst.*'<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid. 89

<sup>82</sup> Duffy 2008, 152

<sup>83</sup> Kerr 1997, 40-42

<sup>84</sup> Chauvet 1995, 90

<sup>85</sup> Kerr 1997, 44

<sup>86</sup> Chauvet 1995, 91

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. 92

Chauvet distinguishes between sign and symbol. Employing Jean Baudrillard's taxonomy, he identifies sign as functioning either as 'a functional logic of *utilitarian value*, based on usefulness', 'an economic logic of *exchange value*, based on equivalence', or 'a differential logic of *sign value*, based on a code of difference.'<sup>88</sup> All of these forms must be distinguished from that of *symbolic exchange*: the three modes of sign mentioned function within a realm of 'value', while symbolic exchange is a matter of 'non-value'.<sup>89</sup> Language has both a symbolic and a signifying level of operation. The dialectical tension between the poles of sign and symbol is always in effect: we do not encounter symbols and signs in pure forms, but always in an admixture. Chauvet's purpose is not to purify away all signifying elements, to leave us with the 'essence' of the symbol, but to maintain that symbol should not be thought of as if it were just a more complex or intense version of sign.

Language has two different levels to it: the recognition of symbol, and the cognition of sign. The typical example of symbol is myth, which is the foundational language that allows a group to recognize and identify itself and its members to recognize themselves and each other. The most typical example of sign is scientific discourse.

Even in scientific discourse, however, where the pole of signification is most emphasized, the symbolic aspect of language remains operative. Words must be '*recognized* as relevant to science,' as belonging to that world.<sup>90</sup> Scientific discourse is also concerned with the 'symbolic capital' of being recognized (as an 'authority', for instance) by a group or institution. Everyday language is also 'constantly caught between sign and symbol.'<sup>91</sup> Perhaps the symbolic character of everyday language is most visible in the case of phatic speech, where the conveying of information is incidental to the purpose of the discourse. Such speech serves as a way of communicating our presence and recognizing the presence of the other person, not chiefly as a means of sharing information. Symbolic exchange can also be seen in such things as handshakes, or even in inanimate objects such as shoes, which can become symbols of suffering and toil. It is symbol that binds us to each other and our world.

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid. 103

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. 104

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. 125

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. 126

The 'pure symbol' does not exist either. Indeed, for symbol to function it often requires a measure of knowledge and cognition, a degree of sign value. This applies to Van Gogh's painting, *A Pair of Shoes*, for instance.<sup>92</sup> Knowing what shoes are, what they are used for, the character of peasant life, the biography of the artist, his historical context in the development of art, etc. all helps to enable the work to have its symbolic effects upon the viewer. Such knowledge can be crucial for the painting to become visible as art. Symbol is not, therefore, something that can stand apart from and independent of sign. 'A symbol about which one could say nothing would dissolve into pure imagination.'<sup>93</sup>

The ancient *symbolon* was 'an object cut in two, one part of which is retained by each partner in a contract.'<sup>94</sup> The parts were valueless by themselves: their symbolic power arose from their connection with the other half. As such the symbol is the '*expression of a social pact based on mutual recognition* and, hence, is a *mediator of identity*.'<sup>95</sup> The meaning of the word 'has been extended to every element (object, word, gesture, person...) that, exchanged within a group, somewhat like a pass-word, permits the group as a whole or individuals therein to recognize one another and identify themselves.'<sup>96</sup>

Symbols transport us into the 'world' to which they belong. In this key respect they differ from signs. Signs refer to something of a different order to themselves, implying 'a difference between two orders of relations: the relations of sensible signifiers, and the relations of intelligible signified meanings.'<sup>97</sup>

Chauvet presents the single phoneme as the most basic form of the symbol.<sup>98</sup> By itself, the single phoneme does not 'signify' anything. However, its utterance relates us to the realm of human conversation and interaction that it presupposes. Chauvet gives the example of our hearing a single phoneme within the middle of a forest: that can be the means by which we are enabled 'to *recognize* a human presence, to *renew our alliance* with humanity.'<sup>99</sup> That single

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<sup>92</sup> Heidegger reflects upon this image at length in his essay 'The Origin of the Work of Art'.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid. 128

<sup>94</sup> Ibid. 112

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. 113

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

phoneme reconnects us with a whole ‘world’ of human life and meaning (our earlier distinction between ‘world’ and ‘universe’ is important here).

A symbol depends for its existence upon the differences and relations that it has with the other parts of the system (‘b’ is only a phoneme as it is distinguished from ‘p’, ‘g’, ‘k’, etc.). In isolation from all of these, it could mean anything. The value of a symbol arises from the place that it occupies in the whole. Chauvet compares this to a shard of porcelain that we find on the street, through which we can recognize a vase.

It seems then that an element becomes a symbol only to the extent that it *represents the whole* (the vase), from which it is inseparable. That is also why *every symbolic element brings with itself the entire socio-cultural system to which it belongs*.<sup>100</sup>

The same principle holds for all sorts of symbols, religious, political, poetic, etc. It is only as it is correlative to other elements that something can function as a symbol and, in functioning as such, it evokes the ‘entire symbolic order to which it belongs’.<sup>101</sup> A symbol is thus a means by which subjects recognize each other, and by which we identify with our world.<sup>102</sup> In fact, so intimate and immediate is this bond that a symbol ‘ceases to function, here and now, as a symbol the moment one steps back and adopts a critical attitude towards it.’<sup>103</sup> Symbol is the ‘third term’ that mediates between subjects and other subjects and between subjects and their world and saves the subject from being lost in its imaginary double.<sup>104</sup>

By contrast, a word is treated as a sign insofar as we are concerned with measuring and establishing the *value* of statements, of approaching language

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid. 115

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Chauvet illustrates his point with reference to Heidegger’s analysis of Van Gogh’s painting of the peasant woman’s shoes. The painting of the shoes does not have a utilitarian value, or ‘communicate knowledge’ in the form of information, nor is it even to be understood by reference to some aesthetic order. Rather the painting symbolically gathers together the whole world of the peasant woman in her shoes—the ‘fatigue of the steps of labor,’ the world of earth and soil, and the anxieties of her life. The work of art, like the symbol more generally, is a ‘making come-into-being’ or an ‘advent’ (Ibid. 117).

<sup>103</sup> Ibid. 116

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. 118. Jacques Lacan’s Real-Symbolic-Imaginary distinction might lie behind such a claim in Chauvet. It is the introduction of the Symbolic that overcomes the ‘mirror phase’ (e.g. Chiesa 2007, 25). See also Ambrose 2012, 76-77 (Ambrose discusses Chauvet’s selective and critical appropriation of Lacanian concepts in some detail).

‘under the aspect of *information*.’<sup>105</sup> Scientific language is signifying language *par excellence*. By contrast, viewing language under the aspect of symbol, ‘the first function of language is not to designate an object or to transmit information—which all language also does—but first *to assign a place to the subject* in its relation to others.’<sup>106</sup>

Chauvet compares this to the experience that one might have when, walking down the streets of distant foreign country as a tourist, you hear a familiar word from your own language and country.<sup>107</sup> Your first thought is not of the signifying meaning of the word spoken, but with the recognition of the world that you share in common with the speaker—another Englishman! The single word can evoke the entire cultural ‘world’ that you share, much as the shard of porcelain can evoke the entire vase in your mind. This is the ‘symbolic’ function of all language, something which precedes its signifying function.

Unlike signs, the function of symbols is not to refer to ‘something else’, but ‘to *join* the persons who produce or receive it with their cultural world (social, religious, economic...) and so to *identify* them as subjects in their relations with other subjects.’<sup>108</sup> Symbols fulfil the most fundamental function of language, the ‘poietic’ function of rendering the real into a world, in contrast to signs’ function of conveying information about the real.

Once again in contrast to a sign, which entails a transposition from the order of the real to the order of information and cognition, the symbol ‘*touches the most real aspect of ourselves and our world*.’<sup>109</sup> In a symbol there is not a mere exterior connection between two realities (such as that established by the word ‘like’ in the simile), but the evoking of a deeper union. Symbol is not, therefore, to be opposed to the real. It is symbol that mediates our relationship with other subjects and our world.

To illustrate the act of symbolization, Chauvet gives the example of two secret agents who are given two irregular halves of a five-dollar bill.<sup>110</sup> A few elements go into this act. The symbol only exists in the *act* of joining. It is a matter of action, not of ideas. The pieces of paper are ‘necessarily *distinct*’

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid. 118

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. 119

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. 121

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. 123

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. 130

(something that is significant for understanding the sacraments' symbolizing of Christ and the Church or the relation between the testaments). The value of each half is *only in relation to the other*. The utilitarian value of the symbolic object is of no importance. The act of symbolization is 'simultaneously *a revealer and an agent*.'<sup>111</sup> Through it the agents are revealed to each other as partners. As an agent, it binds the agents together in a common 'we'. 'The symbol is an agent of alliance *through* being a revealer of identity.'<sup>112</sup>

The *efficacy* of a symbol here 'touches reality itself.'<sup>113</sup> However, it is crucial that we recognize that this 'reality' is not some 'ontological "substance"', but a cultural processed and spoken reality, the most 'real' reality of all.<sup>114</sup> The act of symbolization thus 'carries out the essential vocation of language: to bring about an alliance where subjects may come into being and recognize themselves as such within their world.'<sup>115</sup>

## 5. Symbolic Exchange

In explaining the operation of symbol, Chauvet focuses upon the concept of the symbolic exchange that exists or existed in certain traditional and ancient societies, exchange that is not governed by the logic of value and the marketplace.<sup>116</sup>

This system of "obligatory generosity" confers on the sack of grain or golden object that one exchanges a reality of an order other than that of utilitarian value. It is given "for nothing"—nothing from the viewpoint of this kind of value—but with the understanding that a third party will give you "for nothing" the produce of fishing, harvest, craftsmanship, or plunder.<sup>117</sup>

Every received gift obligates a return, often to a third party. However, one gives without accounting. Chauvet argues that the desire underlying this pattern

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> See Mauss 1954 for the classic treatment of gift.

<sup>117</sup> Chauvet 1995, 101

of exchange is the ‘desire to *be recognized as a subject*, not to lose face, not to fall from one’s social rank, and consequently to compete for prestige.’<sup>118</sup>

Although we are forgetful of this logic, shrouded as it is by the dominance of commercial values in the West, its traces can still be found in our thinking and practice, perhaps especially in the case of gift. Chauvet argues that this ‘obligatory exchange’ is in fact ‘*what allows us to live as subjects and structures all our relations in what they contain of the authentically human.*’<sup>119</sup>

A gift is the best illustration of symbolic exchange. The meaning of a gift is to be sought within the relationship in which the exchange occurs: it cannot be accounted for by utility or commercial value. A gift is an object which ‘one lets go as if it were a part of oneself.’<sup>120</sup> As such it is a signifier of both the absence and the presence of the one to the other. In contrast to utilitarian value (e.g. the car as an efficient means of transportation), exchange value (e.g. equivalence in the marketplace), and sign value (e.g. the car as a sign of one’s social standing), the logic of symbolic exchange is one of *non-value*.<sup>121</sup> Chauvet sees in the realm of the ‘value-sign’ of the marketplace, the full realization of the ‘metaphysics’ which Heidegger exposes.<sup>122</sup>

As already observed, every society will have both the logic of the value-sign and the logic of non-value—of symbolic exchange—in some proportion or other. It is important that we recognize that these represent ‘*two different levels of exchange.*’<sup>123</sup> While the logic of the marketplace is that of value and need, what is exchanged through physical objects in symbolic exchange is far more than the objects themselves are worth in terms of their utilitarian, exchange, or sign value. The objects mediate the relationship between persons, and serve as means for their self-recognition and establishment of their identity and place. This symbolic exchange is a fundamental characteristic of language, as through speech to each other we recognize each other as subjects.

In symbolic exchange, the object serves as the means by which the subjects exchange themselves, through the presence-absence of gift. Even though it is less immediately obvious on the surface of our society, it is this symbolic

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid. 102

<sup>119</sup> Ibid. 103

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid. 104

<sup>122</sup> Ibid. 106

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

exchange—this gift-reception-return-gift—that forms us and enables us to become human subjects.<sup>124</sup> Every one of our significant human relationships is structured and characterized by such an exchange.

Chauvet maintains that symbolic exchange provides us with a very helpful way of understanding the grace, and most specifically the sacramental grace, of God. Grace is ‘beyond the useful and the useless’, being a matter of ‘superabundance’, beyond all value and calculation.<sup>125</sup> Our own selves are received as a free gift:

[B]y the very structure of the exchange, the gratuitousness of the gift *carries the obligation of the return-gift of a response*. Therefore, theologically, grace requires not only this initial gratuitousness on which everything else depends but also the *graciousness of the whole circuit*, and especially of the return-gift. This graciousness qualifies the return-gift as beyond-price, without calculation—in short, as a response of love. *Even the return-gift of our human response thus belongs to the theologically Christian concept of “grace.”*<sup>126</sup>

It seems to me that Chauvet, like many others, is too quick to identify a gift economy with a *gracious* one and fails to wrestle sufficiently with the problematic character of the return-gift. In particular, the concept of ‘debt’ needs to be taken into account. Jacques Godbout writes:

A debt entered into voluntarily is essential to the gift, just as the search for equivalence is an essential tendency in the market model. The partners in a gift system are in a positive or negative state of debt. If it is a positive state, this means that each person believes he owes a great deal to the others. This is not a conception borrowed from accounting. The gift system, as a result, is situated at the opposite extreme from the market system, not because it is unilateral, but because what characterizes the market is, as we have seen, the punctual transaction, without any debt.<sup>127</sup>

The explicit registering of indebtedness may be minimized in order to maintain the necessary freedom of a return gift. The rules of a return gift remain implicit, the logic of equivalence is avoided, and the value of a gift and an act of

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid. 107

<sup>125</sup> Ibid. 108

<sup>126</sup> Ibid. 109

<sup>127</sup> Vandeveld 2000, 30-31



giving is downplayed by the giver—‘don’t mention it, it’s my pleasure...’<sup>128</sup> Nevertheless, economies of gift can easily become dominated by the logic of indebtedness and the imposition of obligation that can never be discharged. Gift can become a mechanism for dissembled power relations. John Thompson writes of Pierre Bourdieu’s recognition of this danger:

[T]here are other, ‘softer’ and more subtle means of exercising power, like the giving of gifts. By giving a gift—especially a generous one that cannot be met by a counter-gift of comparable quality—the giver creates a lasting obligation and binds the recipient in a relation of personal indebtedness. Giving is also a way of possessing: it is a way of binding another while shrouding the bond in a gesture of generosity. This is what Bourdieu describes as ‘symbolic violence,’ in contrast to overt violence of the usurer or the ruthless master; it is ‘gentle, invisible, unrecognized as such, chosen as much as undergone, that of trust, obligation, personal loyalty, hospitality, gifts, debts, piety, in a word, of all the virtues honoured by the ethic of honour.’ ... [Symbolic violence] enables relations of domination to be established and maintained through strategies which are softened and disguised, and which conceal domination beneath the veil of an enchanted relation.<sup>129</sup>

Bourdieu’s recognition of the potential of symbolic exchange to become a source of violence unsettles any easy equation of *gift* with *grace*, presenting a challenge to which certain dimensions of Chauvet’s case are vulnerable. John Milbank states the problem:

If gifts are only given in order to render indebted, to ensure a return of honour, and if debt drives the whole system to ensure continued exact compliance with what has been laid down, marked out by the powerful, both dead and living, then there can be, *we* must judge, no real gift. There only *can be* gift if delay and non-identical repetition can be shown to be in principle irreducible to the operation of such tactics, to the ensuring of the primacy of debt, and the always identical marks of honour.<sup>130</sup>

A positive account of gift must address the tendency for such perverse economies of debt to develop and also recognize the way in which gift may be undergirded by the threat of violence in the case of its rejection or the failure to

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<sup>128</sup> See the discussion in Vandeveld 2000, 31-32

<sup>129</sup> Bourdieu 1991, 23-24

<sup>130</sup> Milbank 1995, 129

provide a suitable return gift.<sup>131</sup> As the problem of debt incurred through the reception of gift and the need to provide an adequate return-gift is a central problem in Christian soteriology and ethics, I think it necessary that we reflect upon an economy of gift as a system fraught with potential difficulties.<sup>132</sup>

In the New Testament, the prevailing economy of gift, debt, obligation, and return-gift is leavened throughout by a new logic, a logic founded upon God as Giver and Guarantor of the return-gift.<sup>133</sup> Followers of Christ are taught to give, expecting nothing in return from the one to whom they have given, but to believe that they will be rewarded by God (Luke 6:35). Our giving is a participation in God's giving, so no one is put in our personal debt (e.g. Ephesians 3:2, 7). Finally, God is the one who discharges our debts, rewarding those who give to us, freeing us from oppressive indebtedness to anyone (e.g. Philippians 4:17-19).

In the gift of Christ and the Spirit we also see provision made for a gracious economy of gift between God and humanity. Through the lens of the atonement theology of Anselm, David Bentley Hart presents an understanding of the life and death of Christ as a new gift that overcomes humanity's rejection of the first gift and which provides for the return-gift: 'When humanity fails to take up the creature's side of the covenant, the righteousness that condemns is also the love that restores by surmounting even the obstacle of human disobedience and lawful subjection to death, to take up the human side on humanity's behalf.'<sup>134</sup> Through the work of the Spirit and in Christ, we are 'gifted' as those who render God's gifts to others and also as those who render humanity's return gift to God. Once again, the categories of sociology and philosophy need to be conditioned by a theological account.

Chauvet maintains that an overemphasis upon gratuitousness—of the priority and overwhelming dominance of God's free gift—which he sees in certain forms of Augustinianism and certain understandings of infant baptism, can be problematic as it deprives the person of the response in which the otherness of

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<sup>131</sup> The power of gifts as a means of control is heavily exploited by salespersons and advertisers (Cialdini 2007, 17-56).

<sup>132</sup> John Milbank's interaction with Derrida's vision of the pure gift is a good place to start in reflecting upon the gift's ethics (Milbank 1995).

<sup>133</sup> Peter Leithart's recent *Gratitude: An Intellectual History* has helped to clarify this point for me.

<sup>134</sup> Hart 2003, 368

the person to whom the gift is given can be affirmed.<sup>135</sup> While some see in God's grace in baptism to the infant who is incapable of response the purest expression of the character of grace, Chauvet cautions against this understanding, stressing that the wholeness of grace is inseparable from the return-gift that responds to it.<sup>136</sup> In speaking of grace, he writes: 'Rather than being represented as an object-value that one would "refine" through analogy, the "treasure" is really not separable from the *symbolic labor* by which the subject itself bears fruit by becoming a believer.'<sup>137</sup>

By now, Chauvet has established the methodological foundation for an understanding of the sacraments as mediations, rather than instruments, 'as expressive media in which the identification and thus the coming-to-be of subjects as believers take place.'<sup>138</sup> He wishes to present the sacraments 'as *acts of symbolization* putting into effect the illocutionary dimension of language acts, according to which they effect ... a *relation of places* between the subjects and thus an identification of these subjects with regard to others within this particular "world" we call the Church.'<sup>139</sup> This is the framework within which Chauvet will articulate his understanding of symbolic efficacy. To do so, he employs J.L. Austin's analysis of language acts.

Every language act 'is a process' which 'sets the system ... to work.'<sup>140</sup> Two distinct examples of this are the historical *narrative*, which occurs in the past tense and is governed by the third person and the *discourse*, occurring in the present tense, 'unique every time,' and 'governed by the first person in relation to the second person.'<sup>141</sup>

Declaration and performance 'activate two different *functions* of language.'<sup>142</sup> Neither exists in a pure state. For instance, in saying 'I order you to close the door', something is being declared (the existence of an open door that I

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<sup>135</sup> Chauvet 1995, 109

<sup>136</sup> While Chauvet's emphasis on the necessity of the return gift is healthy, it is important to grasp that baptism is itself the gift of Faith and that it 'conforms' us to Christ's response to God's grace and to the response of the saints throughout the ages. We are not thrown back upon ourselves in our response to God.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid. 110

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid. 130

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid. 131

desire to be closed), yet the accent is on the performance—I am ordering you and placing you in a position of subordination to me.

Austin maintains that every language act have three dimensions, which vary in importance from act to act. The *locutionary* act is the act of saying something. The *illocutionary* act is the ‘act effected *in* saying something.’<sup>143</sup> For instance, in saying ‘I give you my word’, I am performing the illocutionary act of promising. The *perlocutionary* act is the consequence of the language act, ‘the act effected *by* saying something.’<sup>144</sup> For instance, the perlocutionary dimension of my language act might be that of persuading the person with whom I am speaking.

Chauvet identifies a few things that we need to recognize when employing these distinctions. First, we should distinguish between the intra-linguistic illocutionary effect and the extra-linguistic perlocutionary effect.<sup>145</sup> Second, the illocutionary is ‘not concerned with the true or the false, but with the happy and the unhappy, that is to say, in the last analysis with the legitimate or the illegitimate.’<sup>146</sup> I may not, for instance, have the authority to perform a particular act (e.g. proclaiming a couple man and wife). Third, the illocutionary function depends upon convention, upon such things as the following of proper procedure. The perlocutionary act does not.

Fourth, the illocutionary-performative dimension of language is most visible in the language acts of *ritual*. The power of the illocutionary act does not derive from some magical character of language itself, but from a ‘relation between the properties of the discourse, the properties of the one who pronounces it, and the properties of the institution that authorizes one to pronounce it.’<sup>147</sup>

Fifth, there are different degrees of ritual. The precise ritual form of something like baptism is not present in the informal ‘I bet you’ uttered in a conversation between friends: ‘the reference to the absent Third (the social Other under whose jurisdiction alone a bet can be made) is now only implicit.’<sup>148</sup> In this level of ritual and the illocutionary, the ‘duality between saying and doing’ is

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid. 132

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid. 133

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid. 134

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

broken, and ‘a transformation in the relations between the subjects, under the authority of the social Third (the law)’ is symbolically effected.<sup>149</sup>

Giving examples of various ethnographic rituals, Chauvet argues that their symbolic efficacy cannot be understood by means of cause and effect, or according to some sort of physical law (such as a sort of psychosomatic effect). Rather, the symbolic efficacy is a function ‘of the consensus created around the representations, on the one hand, and of the symbolic connection between the representations and what is at issue, on the other.’<sup>150</sup> It should also be recognized that this symbolic efficacy, even though it may occasionally have dramatic physical effects, may not always aim directly at the healing of the body.

Within the rituals of Christian faith we seek ‘effects other than the purely corporeal’, effects that we commonly speak of as ‘grace’.<sup>151</sup> This grace should be understood according to the symbolic order of language, which, as we have seen, binds subjects together within a meaningful ‘world’. ‘It is precisely a *new relation of places between subjects*, a relationship of filial and brotherly and sisterly alliance, that the sacramental “expression” aims at instituting or restoring in faith.’<sup>152</sup>

## **6. Time in Chauvet**

I have observed the difficulty of relating typology to the content and efficacy of the sacraments, a difficulty primarily consequent on the presumed heterogeneity of sign and cause. On account of its association with the sign dimension of the sacraments, typology is detached from the efficacy of the sacraments. Furthermore, even in the context of the sacraments’ signification, typology is marginalized: typology is often entirely secondary and subordinate to the generic signification of the sacramental—water cleanses and purifies, bread and wine are shared, nourish, and are ingested.

Using the work of Chauvet, I have argued for a movement beyond the sign-cause opposition. The categories of symbol and of symbolic efficacy, as championed by Chauvet, represent a means by which this breach can be

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid. 139

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid. 140

overcome. Chauvet's work paves the way for a further movement, one in which the temporal dimension truly comes into its own. Time and history do play important roles in Chauvet's account of the sacraments. His explanation of the Jewish and Christian cults and the contrast between them is illuminating here.

In many traditional cultures, the awareness of the passage of time can be shaped by the succession of the generations and the patterns of the cosmos and the cycles of nature. Such awareness need not be strictly 'cyclical', as it can take the form of an 'open circle' or spiral, like an ascending circular staircase, where the same point is passed over again, but on a different level. Scripture, however, marks a significant departure from these accounts of time and history:

The Bible makes a dramatic break with the pattern of this "spiral" notion of time structured by great cosmic cycles. From the beginning it prizes events perceived as moments of the *advent of unexpected newness*.<sup>153</sup>

The prophetic character of events is clearly revealed in Judaism, which is firmly rooted in the realm of history. The story of the world's origins is the bearer of a story of a new world to come: 'it is from the *Omega* that we read the *Alpha*.'<sup>154</sup> The first place of God's revelation is in history, and Israel's faith is founded upon this history. While we should beware of losing sight of the creation and its consistency, we should always relate the creation of the world firmly to the history of redemption. Creation is that which sets time in motion: 'The divine word is before all else the *creator of history*, and each new word of God makes a new event-advent arise.'<sup>155</sup> Chauvet writes:

Biblical time is most appropriately thought of, not as the time of metaphysical Being, but as that of the *historical Perhaps* and thus as that of the *symbolic Other* in connection with human liberty snatched thereby from *Ananke* or blind *Fatum*; it is a risky time but capable by this very fact of giving birth to the unheard-of, instead of simply reproducing the always-expected of the eternal recurrence of the Same.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid. 229

<sup>154</sup> Ibid. 230

<sup>155</sup> Ibid. 231

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

For Chauvet, it is in the concept of the *memorial*, paradigmatically displayed in the Passover, that the essence of the Jewish cult is most clearly seen. The concept of the memorial involves the ‘insertion of those who are remembering into the very event the celebration commemorates.’<sup>157</sup> It can involve both a remembering of God’s self-revealing action in the founding event, and a reminding of God on the basis of that action.<sup>158</sup> ‘The memory of the past thus makes the present move; it puts back on their feet, in view of a new beginning, those who are prostrate in the silence and oppression of exile.’<sup>159</sup> This is the communal memory whereby the people of God are regenerated. ‘In its Passover memorial, Israel *receives its past as present*, and this gift guarantees a *promise of a future*.’<sup>160</sup>

Chauvet discusses the firstfruits rite of Deuteronomy 26:1-11 in this context. The form of this rite teaches Israel that the land ‘is to be always conquered—or rather always received.’<sup>161</sup> Israel continues to ‘enter authentically into possession of the land’ through a ‘symbolic act of dispossession.’<sup>162</sup> Chauvet suggests that the role of the Levites within Israel was in large part to ‘remind Israel, from deep within itself, of its identity: even after having entered into possession of the land, Israel can live as Israel only by continuing, generation after generation, to receive it from Yahweh’s gracious hand.’<sup>163</sup> The firstfruits ritual involved re-calling Israel to ‘its responsibility within history.’<sup>164</sup>

The fact that Israel’s liturgy had to be ‘verified’ in the treatment of the poor entailed a ‘crisis in ritual’.<sup>165</sup> Unlike the pagan nations, Israel could never be ‘in tranquil possession of its own cult’, but was constantly challenged in its existential and ethical responsibility.<sup>166</sup> This theme is especially noticeable in the prophets and their opposition to cultic formalism.

For Chauvet, eschatology is at the heart of the difference between Christianity and Judaism. Eschatology is not merely the ‘not yet’ of the parousia

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid. 232. This claim should be distinguished from the approach presented by mysteriological piety, which will be discussed in my seventh chapter.

<sup>158</sup> See the discussion of the Eucharist as a memorial in Jeremias 1966, 244-255.

<sup>159</sup> Chauvet 1995, 233

<sup>160</sup> Ibid. 234

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid. 236

<sup>163</sup> Ibid. 237

<sup>164</sup> Ibid. 238

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

but the ‘eschaton is the final manifestation of the resurrecting force of Christ’, it ‘speaks the future of his resurrection in the world.’<sup>167</sup> Eschatology means that ‘one cannot confess Jesus as *risen* without simultaneously confessing him as *resurrecting the world*.’<sup>168</sup>

It is after the ‘tear’ of Easter that the ‘newness’ of Christian worship begins to appear.<sup>169</sup> Chauvet explores the metaphor of the tear as it is employed as a metaphor for newness in the New Testament—the tearing of the heavens at Jesus’ baptism, the tearing of old wineskins, the high priest’s tearing of his clothes as Jesus’ trial, and the tearing of the Temple curtain from top to bottom. ‘In Jesus, Christ and Lord, the religious fabric of Judaism has been torn’, and something radically new arises within it.<sup>170</sup>

The Christian cult is ‘*of another order* than the Jewish cult whose heir it is.’<sup>171</sup> For Chauvet, this is not primarily a moral difference, but a theological one.

More precisely, it is founded entirely upon the rereading of the whole religious system, a rereading imposed by the confession that Jesus is the Christ. Thus, all rests on Easter and Pentecost. In a word, the difference is *eschatological*.<sup>172</sup>

Although Jews recognized the Law as a gift and their observance of the cult as a response, their justification occurred through their performance of the cultic works of the Law (in a ‘eucharistic’ manner, not as an accumulation of merit). Christ creates the key difference.

For Christians’ thanksgiving is Christ himself, and no longer their own faithful execution of the Law or the uprightness of their grateful hearts. The very principle of justification is different from what it is in Judaism: it is identified with Christ, the unique subject who has fully accomplished the Law, inscribed as it was by the Spirit in his innermost being. Consequently, to be a Christian is to live under “the law of the Spirit” ... to share in “the Spirit of Christ” (Rom 8:9). The *new modality* of justification is to be understood starting from and in connection with

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid. 240

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid. 247

<sup>170</sup> Ibid. 249

<sup>171</sup> Ibid. 250

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.



this *new* Christo-pneumatic *principle*: no longer the practice of the works of the Law ... but *faith* in Jesus as Christ and Lord.<sup>173</sup>

The Jewish cult involved ‘ascending’ to God—albeit as a response to God’s previous descent in the Covenant and the giving of the Law—but the Christian cult is one of welcome:

From now on it is a question of *welcoming* salvation from God’s self, fundamentally bestowed as a grace “*descended*” upon us in Jesus... Thus, we no longer have to lift ourselves toward God through the performance of good works, ritual or moral, or through the intermediary of a priestly caste, but we have to welcome salvation *in our historical existence* as a gift of grace...<sup>174</sup>

The Jewish temple, priesthood, and sacrificial system having been done away with, the priesthood, temple, and sacrifice of the new covenant is realized in the body of Christians. In light of this, ‘the *ritual* memory of Jesus’ death and resurrection is not Christian unless it is veri-fied in an *existential* memory whose place is none other than the believers’ bodies.’<sup>175</sup>

Within the New Testament the Old Testament concept of the ‘sacralisation’ (the setting apart) of the profane is replaced by the ‘sanctification’ of the profane: ‘the prime location of liturgy or sacrifice for Christians is the ethics of everyday life sanctified by theological faith and charity.’<sup>176</sup>

In the same perspective, for the Jewish category of “intermediary” between God and humankind (the intermediary of the Law and the sacrificial priesthood) that of “*mediation*” is substituted, that is to say, a milieu in which the new communication of God with humankind made possible by Christ and the Spirit takes place; and this milieu is corporality itself.<sup>177</sup>

Chauvet has argued that sacrament ‘acts as a symbol *for the passage from the letter toward the body*.’<sup>178</sup> In the relationship between sacrament and ethics we see how the community begins to ‘write itself’ into the text that it is reading.

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid. 252

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid. 260-261

<sup>176</sup> Ibid. 262

<sup>177</sup> Ibid. 262

<sup>178</sup> Ibid. 263

The teaching of the new covenant is that '*the Book, through the action of the very Spirit of God, will become one with the body of the people.*'<sup>179</sup> Christ is the one subject who has fully incorporated, and we live out of his Spirit.

'[T]he resurrection of Jesus and the gift of the Spirit specify corporality as the eschatological place of God.'<sup>180</sup> 'The body is henceforth, through the Spirit, the living letter where the risen Christ eschatologically takes on flesh and manifests himself to all people.'<sup>181</sup> The proclamation of the Scriptures in the ecclesia manifests their very essence. The Scripture always seeks to be inscribed in the social body: there is an essential connection between the two. This essential connection is crucial to understanding the place of sacrament:

The element "*Sacrament*" is thus *the symbolic place of the on-going transition between Scripture and Ethics, from the letter to the body.* The liturgy is *the powerful pedagogy where we learn to consent to the presence of the absence of God, who obliges us to give him a body in the world,* thereby giving the sacraments their plenitude in the "liturgy of the neighbor" and giving the ritual memory of Jesus Christ its plenitude in our existential memory.<sup>182</sup>

If Judaism was characterized by a 'second naiveté', as the cult was leavened by the prophetic critique, Christianity must be characterized by a 'third naiveté'.<sup>183</sup> The liturgy still embraces our whole being and not merely our brains. However, the prophetic criticism is fulfilled as the transition from letter to body becomes an eschatological possibility.

The concluding paragraph of *Symbol and Sacrament* returns to the theme of the sacraments' relationship with time:

Thus, sacraments speak of the eschatological *in-between* time.... Sacraments are the bearers of the joy of the "already" and the distress of the "not yet." They are the *witnesses of a God who is never finished with coming*: the amazed witnesses of a God who comes continually; the patient witnesses, patient unto weariness at times, of a God who "is" not

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid. 264

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid. 265

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

here except by mode of passage. And of this passage, the sacraments are the trace...<sup>184</sup>

### ***7. From Symbol to Typology***

Despite the welcome importance that he accords to the historical and eschatological dimensions of the Christian cult and his attempt to address the pneumatological deficit in Western theology, the reader of Chauvet can experience something of a jolt between his more general treatment of symbol and his later treatment of the sacraments in relation to the work of Christ and the Spirit. The latter treatment is heavily conditioned at various points by a robust account of temporality, history, and eschatology, while the former seems to function on a largely synchronic plane.

Given the lack of a robust temporal dimension in Chauvet's treatment of symbol, the suitability of symbols to mediate the eschatological reign of Christ might not be entirely clear. The rich eschatological vision of Chauvet's theology fails adequately to condition his account of symbol. Chauvet's account of symbol arises from the requisitioning of Heideggerian philosophy for theological ends. Once again, homology is overstated and Christian thought fails to determine the category as thoroughly as it needs to.

Where Chauvet speaks of the sacraments effecting a '*relationship of places*'<sup>185</sup> between subjects, I wish to explore their creation of a *relationship of times*. Through a theological account of typology, I believe that we can develop an account of a symbol for which temporality is integral.

The peculiar absence of a clear temporal dimension within Chauvet's account of symbol cannot be attributed entirely to the under-activity of theological categories at this point in his thought. Bourdieu, for instance, highlights the manner in which time is integral to the meaning of the exchange of gift: 'In every society it may be observed that, if it is not to constitute an insult, the counter-gift must be *deferred* and *different*, because the immediate return of an exactly identical object clearly amounts to a refusal (i.e. the return of the same

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid. 555. Elsewhere, Chauvet speaks of the threat of an 'incarnational' (reducing eschatology to teleology) and an 'eschatological' excess (an emphasis upon radical and absolute discontinuity), with the Christian memorial establishing a safe course between this Scylla and Charybdis (Ibid. 546-547).

<sup>185</sup> Ibid. 140

object).'<sup>186</sup> He criticizes the way in which theorists, on account of their 'objective' position as non-participants, spatialize society in their theorizing. Society is laid out as a map, erasing all temporal functions. By approaching the study of the gift in such a manner, Lévi-Strauss and others fail to understand it adequately. What they miss is that the temporal interval between gift and return gift is constitutive of the meaning of both: by treating gift and return-gift as if simultaneous their meaning is lost:

[G]ift exchange is opposed on the one hand to *swapping*, which, like the theoretical model of the cycle of reciprocity, telescopes gift and counter-gift into the same instant, and on the other hand, to *lending*, in which the return of the loan is explicitly guaranteed by a juridical act and is thus *already accomplished* at the very moment of the drawing up of a contract capable of ensuring that the acts it prescribes are predictable and calculable.... [T]he operation of gift exchange presupposes (individual and collective) misrecognition (*méconnaissance*) of the reality of the objective "mechanism" of the exchange, a reality which an immediate response brutally exposes: the *interval* between gift and counter-gift is what allows a pattern of exchange that is always liable to strike the observer and also the participants as *reversible*, i.e. both forced and interested, to be experienced as irreversible.<sup>187</sup>

When we analyse gift-exchange without adequate respect for time, the manner in which gifts give meaning to time and time gives meaning to gifts will become opaque to us. More significantly for our ends, we cannot remove 'timing' from a Christian account of gift without doing much violence to its meaning. The liturgy is an ordered sequence of reception and gift that cannot be collapsed into a single moment without the sacrifice of meaning. The gift of salvation in history is something that occurs 'at the fullness of the time' (Galatians 4:4).

Michel De Certeau contrasts the map to the narrated itinerary.<sup>188</sup> While the map captures an entire realm in a synchronic and panoptic vision, onto which movements can be charted, the itinerary is narrated, heard, and enacted. The person following the itinerary is embedded in time and does not rise above it in the manner of the map-reader. The conceptual category of symbol within which Chauvet articulates his understanding of the sacraments is often more congruent

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<sup>186</sup> Bourdieu 1977, 5

<sup>187</sup> Ibid. 5-6

<sup>188</sup> Certeau 1984, 119ff.

with the analogy of the map: my intention is to move in the direction of an approach more congruent with the analogy of the itinerary.

An overemphasis upon synchronic frameworks in our understanding of the sacraments may be a result of the elevation of sight within the Western sensorium.<sup>189</sup> The eye controls the object of its vision, and operates from a position of detachment. Catherine Pickstock argues that the dominance of the eye leads to a ‘spatialization’ of reality and truth, space becoming a ‘pseudo-eternity’.<sup>190</sup> The gaze negates time and the uncircumscribable gratuity of the ‘arrival’ that is characteristic of it.

Peter Candler deploys the analogy of the itinerary to the understanding of medieval theological texts, such as Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae*.<sup>191</sup> Rather than serving as—or rather, containing—a theological ‘map’, the *Summa* ‘furnish’ a route or itinerary for the reader to follow. The reader of such a text ‘performs’ the itinerary, in a manner that involves a closer identification with the text than of that between the reader and the map. The reading of such a text is a rhetorical and spiritual act in which the reader experiences ‘stations’ on the way, and is provided with ‘route indicators’, all of which provide for the soul’s ascent to God.<sup>192</sup> Candler speaks of these texts serving the purpose of ‘manuduction’, leading the reader by the hand towards God.<sup>193</sup>

I believe that such categories will prove illuminating for our understanding of the role of the sacraments. The sacraments are itineraries, furnishing us with a route which we perform in their ritual enactment. Scripture, liturgical texts, administrators, catechesis, mystagogues, and formularies are all manuductors in these itineraries. A stress upon the notion of the itinerary gives significance to the particular character of the route itself, not just to the origin and the destination. It is in such an appreciation of the particularity of the route that typology comes to the fore.

## ***8. Typology, Ritual, and Music***

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<sup>189</sup> Knight 2006, 182ff.

<sup>190</sup> Pickstock 1998, 48ff.

<sup>191</sup> Candler 2006, 44f.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid. 45

<sup>193</sup> This concept of the text as itinerary rather than map will prove very important when I discuss Scripture in my fifth chapter.

Even though the metaphor of the itinerary brings to light the importance of order, sequence, and route in time, in concluding this chapter I want to suggest that in music we will discover a much richer framework for thinking about both typology and ritual. Jeremy Begbie has advocated for the use of music as a conceptual tool within theology, arguing that, on account of the intensity of time's expression within it, it provides us with a better means for thinking time and its relationship with our embodied condition.<sup>194</sup>

Within a piece of music there is usually *a multiplicity of temporal continua, operating concurrently....* [W]e can find different kinds of temporal succession, which intersect, interpenetrate and enhance one another as the music unfolds.<sup>195</sup>

Begbie enumerates a number of dimensions of music's temporality: a 'teleological dynamic' characterized by tension and resolution,<sup>196</sup> rhythm as 'motion in the dynamic field of metre,'<sup>197</sup> and melody as 'motion in the dynamic field of key.'<sup>198</sup> Reflection upon these and various other aspects of music's temporality, he suggests, can provide an antidote to habitual modern ways of conceptualizing time, in particular our notion of time as homogeneous quantifiable linearity, composed of units.

Music demonstrates directionality, but not the 'one-directional linearity' that characterized modern concepts of time: it is 'structured through layers of waves of intensification and release.'<sup>199</sup> While music can be measured, it cannot be reduced to terms of quantity.<sup>200</sup> Music also affords us a new vantage upon transience:

The tones which die to give way to others are related, not externally by being placed on a straight line but internally by virtue of waves of tension and resolution, such that the tones' past, present and future are, in some sense, interwoven. Music, in other words, subverts the assumption that transience is necessarily harmful, that fleetingness is intrinsically irrational.... [M]usic can demonstrate and embody in sound a

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<sup>194</sup> Begbie 2000, 30

<sup>195</sup> Ibid. 35

<sup>196</sup> Ibid. 37-39

<sup>197</sup> Ibid. 39-44

<sup>198</sup> Ibid. 45-51

<sup>199</sup> Ibid. 59

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

positive transience.... By the same token, even where transience is very obviously destructive, music, through its interweaving of the temporal modes, enacts its own kind of challenge to the notion that past events are necessarily and irretrievably ‘distant’.<sup>201</sup>

Music also offers a challenge to the imagination of time that underlies a common construal of history in progressivism. Time does not necessarily advance cumulatively towards the ‘goal which gathers the temporal process together.’<sup>202</sup> Begbie remarks:

Over and over again in tonal music we have closures which are positioned in the metric matrix in such a way that they ‘stretch forward’ for further resolution. This lends the piece an incomplete character, an ‘opening out’. We are given a tension which is not fully resolved, or which is only dissipated in the silence which follows the piece. The music is projected beyond the final cadence into the ensuing silence. Promise ‘breaks out’ of sound.<sup>203</sup>

Music also provides us with ways of conceptualizing discontinuity and ‘radical and qualitative novelty’.<sup>204</sup> These all have significant potential for helping us to conceptualize the temporal character of God’s salvation.

Beyond the aspects of temporality highlighted by itinerary, music brings such things as rhythm, tempo, timing, duration, metre, key, repetition, variation, and development, tension, anticipation, and resolution, and the relationship between score and performance into sharper focus.<sup>205</sup> The Heideggerian emphasis upon language as the house of being—something central to Chauvet’s project—can be filled out as we explore the *musical* character of language and action. Within music we find a dynamic and powerful play of presence and absence that exceeds that which we find in words alone, for time is a much more significant structuring dimension of music than it is of regular speech or writing.

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid. 61

<sup>202</sup> Ibid. 59

<sup>203</sup> Ibid. 126

<sup>204</sup> Ibid. 60

<sup>205</sup> When I engage with Kevin Vanhoozer’s work at a later point in this thesis, I will reflect upon the relationship between *script* and performance. The word-focused character of Vanhoozer’s script metaphor could helpfully be complemented by a *score*-performance metaphor. Begbie also discusses the distinction between music’s ‘notable structure’ and the structure that it manifests as ‘temporally, dynamically *alive*’ (ibid. 56).

In typology, we encounter time in an intense form—the ‘higher time’ discussed by such as Charles Taylor<sup>206</sup>—time that exhibits a musical quality, with many intra-temporal and inter-temporal relations and modes of succession. The time of God’s historical action is a rich, full, and *orchestrated* time, not the quantifiable moments of a hollow time marked out by the ticking of the clock. Later in this thesis, I will suggest that the modes of participation that time holds out to us—modes of participation that are essential to typology—are underexplored and that music is a window into their operation.

Even more prominently than in the case of the symbol in the synchronic symbolic order, the type within history maintains not merely *particularity*, but also *distance*. Not only having the unspecific distance of a generic temporal alterity, types are held at *specific* distances from each other, their distances measured in various ways—by the elapse of quantifiable time that intervenes between their occurrence; by epochal separation; by the difference established by transposition into an eschatological key; by differences in their duration; by the heterogeneous modes of temporality characteristic of eschatology, foundational history, continuing history, or eternity; by repetition with variation of temporal patterns; or by apocalyptic irruption. The degree to which distance is constitutive of the value of symbol is more markedly apparent in the case of that which is robustly temporal. Like the pregnant silence between notes, it is not an absence, but a realm of profound tension, anticipation, or remembrance.<sup>207</sup>

The categories appropriate to such a temporally arriving reality are those of desire and beauty, categories inappropriate to the closed and circumscribable order of traditional metaphysics. The correspondence of beauty with difference and distance is explored by David Bentley Hart:

Beauty is the true form of distance. Beauty inhabits, belongs to, and possesses distance, but more than that, it gives distance.... If indeed “metaphysics” names that species of discourse that strives to deny difference and overcome distance, then a proper understanding of beauty’s place in theology may show how Christian thought eludes metaphysical ambitions, without sacrificing (as a prevalent philosophical prejudice often presumes one must) the language of analogy, reconciliation, or truth.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> Taylor 2007, 54

<sup>207</sup> I have already noted Bourdieu’s recognition of the importance of *tempo* in the process of gift-giving (Bourdieu 1977, 6ff.).

<sup>208</sup> Hart 2003, 18



For Hart, this distance and difference is related to time, which is perceived to possess a musical character.<sup>209</sup> Central to music is the creation and celebration of the beauty of distance and difference in time:

The harmony of the kingdom is not the proper arrangement of essences, but a choral placing and yielding of voices... The motion of reconciliation in the Spirit, which is the motion that makes time beautiful, occurs within time; this, at least, is the assurance given by Christian eschatology: that the particular is always included within the terms of reconciliation, that reconciliation is not an *Aufhebung*, a tragic forsaking of the particular instance, but a *symphonia*. The beauty of time is its openness to the novelty of peace, which can redeem every moment, “carry back” all discord into the complications of God’s harmony.<sup>210</sup>

The typology of God’s work in history—including the enactment of the ‘music’ of this within word and sacrament—is one of the principal ways in which this redemptive end is achieved and manifested.

In addition to its intense temporal character, music has a deeply *embodied* character. Mark Johnson investigates the question of music’s ‘meaning’, concluding that ‘music is meaningful because it can present the flow of human experience, feeling, and thinking in concrete, embodied forms—and this is meaning in its deepest sense.’<sup>211</sup> Music ‘appeals to our felt sense of life.’<sup>212</sup> Johnson writes:

We are moved by it, and we are moved because music orders our experience using tone quality, pitch, meter, rhythm, and other processes that we feel in our bodies. We are moved bodily and emotionally and qualitatively. The experience of sitting quietly in a chair and listening to music is almost unnatural, for our *bodies* want to move with the music. That is why music and dance are so closely and happily intertwined. Music captures us, carries us along on a sensuous, rhythmic tonal adventure, and then deposits us, changed, in a different place from where we started.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> Music’s elevation of distance and difference makes it an apt medium for the iconic and figural modes of perception that I will discuss later in this thesis.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid. 401-402

<sup>211</sup> Johnson 2008, 236

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid. 236-237

In music, time comes alive for us and we are caught up into its movement. The significance of music's capacity to establish patterns of movement into which we are drawn is of immense consequence. There is a deep connection between music and 'body coordination', both that of the individual and that of the social body. Music can provide a template for initiating consecutive and coordinated action, bringing together disorganized parts into a whole. This is true for social groups: music serves both a bonding and a coordinating purpose.<sup>214</sup> Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy speaks of the power of song to bind us together:

[I]n singing, we are less remote from other minds than in other forms of communication. Here, the whole notion of different minds is subdued in favor of stressing the unanimity. The "inner" life of man is not a privilege of private individuals. Any group in the world has this inner sanctuary. Even big nations have their privacy where they sing...<sup>215</sup>

Oliver Sacks remarks on the related phenomenon of coordination of action:

The almost irresistible power of rhythm is evident in many other contexts: in marching, it serves both to entrain and coordinate movement and to whip up a collective and perhaps martial excitement... We see it with work songs of every sort—rhythmic songs that probably arose with the beginnings of agriculture, when tilling the soil, hoeing, and threshing all required the combined and synchronized efforts of a group of people. Rhythm and its entrainment of movement (and often emotion), its power to "move" people, in both senses of the word, may well have had a crucial cultural and economic function in human evolution, bringing people together, producing a sense of collectivity and community.<sup>216</sup>

The power of music to coordinate is also true for the individual: music can temporarily restore 'kinetic melody' to those who have lost it, as in the case of Parkinson's Disease.<sup>217</sup> Music can also elevate the powers of memory, rhythm assisting us to remember and to recite.<sup>218</sup> Embedded in musical sequences, we can perform processes that we could not perform without it.

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<sup>214</sup> See Huron 2001, 53ff. for a fascinating exploration of the bonding purpose of music.

<sup>215</sup> Rosenstock-Huessy 1970, 125

<sup>216</sup> Sacks 2008, 267-268

<sup>217</sup> Ibid. 270ff.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid. 256-260

By this point, I trust that the value of the musical quality of ritual will be more apparent. Ritual coordinates many bodies into unified action. It carries us along in its patterns, capturing our embodied imaginations, minds, and emotions through its music and movement. It binds us together in song. It assists our memories with its rhythms. It coordinates us with its choreography of bodies—standing, kneeling, turning, etc.

A central theme of this thesis is the relationship between typology and ritual. Christian liturgy is the place in which we encounter the musicality of the divine drama in an especially elevated form,<sup>219</sup> and it is where we are most powerfully incorporated into its music. Liturgy has music at its heart, coordinating us, capturing our bodies and imaginations, binding us together as one, so that together we might be raised up into the one great Song.

## ***9. Conclusion***

Typology highlights the non-self-presence of time, and the possibility of the presence of times to each other. The symbolic character of time articulated in typology, and the sorts of presences and absences between times that it describes, furnish us with a basis upon which to speak of the typological efficacy of the sacraments, by virtue of the homology of symbol and type and the case advanced by Chauvet. It is through difference in temporal relation—the intervals and motifs of the divine music—that the self is unlocked from its place and time, and caught up within the divine song, as the Father sings forth his Son on the breath of his Spirit.

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<sup>219</sup> Sung readings, for instance, are one way of manifesting the musical quality of God's deeds in history.

## 2

### THESE THINGS BECAME OUR EXAMPLES

#### The Figural Character of Scripture

The first chapter of this thesis presented a more conceptual study of symbol, introducing typology as one species within that genus. Particular emphasis was placed upon the importance of time, a dimension that is relatively muted in accounts of the operations of symbol such as that offered by Louis-Marie Chauvet. I argued that this neglect of time results in a misleading and attenuated account of the phenomena under analysis. Without wishing to collapse all analysis into a temporal framework, I have sought to accent this dimension. Within this chapter I will proceed to the more specific questions of hermeneutics and theology that must attend any treatment of typology. Once again, the factor of time will be central to my discussion.

#### *1. Allegory*

The importance of time and history in relation to typology is widely acknowledged and often serves as a basis upon which to distinguish typology from allegory, with which it is frequently connected. G.W.H. Lampe writes:

Allegory differs radically from the kind of typology which rests upon the perception of actual historical fulfilment. The reason for this great difference is simply that allegory takes no account of history. The

exegete has to penetrate through the shell of history to the inner kernel of eternal spiritual or moral truth.<sup>1</sup>

For Lampe, typology ‘consists in recognition of historical correspondences and deals in terms of past and future,’ while allegory operates according to a ‘quasi-Platonist doctrine’ whereby the literal sense of the text conceals a spiritual sense that must be discovered by the illumined reader.<sup>2</sup> One of the chief presumed dangers of allegory is found in its potential to fragment the Scriptures, uprooting texts from their original historical element, within which they are related to the broader symbolic world and narratives of the canonical texts, requisitioning them as metaphors in the service of alien conceptual schemes.

Even when the unity of the divine inspiration of Old and New Testament is maintained and outright Marcionism rejected, allegorical readings are seen to risk creating a breach within the biblical text as the unity of divine activity, the people of God, and the scriptural narrative across the testaments is obscured by the denigration of the historical sense.

While the concerns expressed by those presenting sharp distinctions between typology and allegory are not alien to the earlier Christian tradition, they are not couched in the same terms. Stating his causes for demurring at Daniélou’s opposition between typology—concerned with history and events—and allegory—concerned with words—Andrew Louth writes:

[I]n defending allegory I am seeking to defend an aspect of the thought of the Fathers and early medieval theologians, and though I would argue that they do anticipate the distinction Daniélou and others indicate by the words ‘allegory’ and ‘typology’ ... they do not express it by these words. What Daniélou calls ‘typology’ they call ‘allegory’ (this is particularly true of the Latin tradition), and we are all set to misunderstand them if we restrict the reference of the term ‘allegory’ to something opposed to typology. (‘Typology’ is in fact a very recent coinage: the use of the Latin word *typologia* dates from around 1840, and the English ‘typology’ from 1844, according to Charity.)<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lampe & Woollcombe 1957, 31. ‘Typological exegesis is the search for linkages between events, persons or things *within the historical framework of revelation*, whereas allegorism is the search for a secondary and hidden meaning underlying the primary and obvious meaning of a narrative [which] ... does not necessarily have any connexion at all with the historical framework of revelation.’ Ibid. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 30

<sup>3</sup> Louth 1989, 118. See also the discussion in Wright 2009, 63-65.

The standard criticisms of allegory, while identifying genuine concerns, also often involve unfair caricatures of Origen, the poster boy of allegorical readings of Scripture. That Origen employs certain key terms quite differently from his critics has proved a cause of misunderstanding and led to much unjustified criticism. Brevard Childs writes:

The initial difficulty arises from the fact that the literal or bodily sense is not defined the same by Origen and his modern critics. Origen means by it the raw material of the text before any interpretation is made. The result is that the *literal* sense for moderns is often the *spiritual* sense for Origen.<sup>4</sup>

Origen takes the Apostle Paul, not Philo and the Platonists, as his model and justification for his allegorical approach to interpretation.<sup>5</sup> Where Origen denies a literal sense, he is not denying historical meaning, nor does he abandon history for the sake of allegory.<sup>6</sup> The spiritual sense is not sundered from the literal sense in Origen's understanding. Childs suggests that Origen would have 'vehemently rejected' the allegation that his allegorical reading of the text involved the imposition of a 'quasi-Gnostic system' onto Scripture, suppressing its historical sense.<sup>7</sup> The impetus for Origen's allegorical readings was a theological conviction about the *reference* of the biblical text:

Origen was committed to an understanding shared by the New Testament, the Church Fathers, and the church tradition that preceded him that the sacred biblical text was the vehicle for God's continual revelation. The text, in all its multidimensional shape, both literal and spiritual, pointed beyond itself to its substance, which was a spiritual reality. Young emphasizes ... that the multiple meanings in Origen are really multiple referents. As a result, Origen's exegetical practice is understood not by contrasting literal and figurative senses, but in his application of cross-referencing within scripture.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Childs 2004, 67

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.; de Lubac 2000, 7. Martens 2012, 85n65 observes that Origen's appeal to Jesus and Paul involved both an appeal to them as proof of the *importance* of allegorical reading of the Scriptures and also 'as precedent for doing a *particular sort* of allegorical exegesis of the law and the prophets.'

<sup>6</sup> Childs 2004, 67

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. 68

While the merits of particular allegorical *readings* can be questioned, the virtues of such an allegorical *approach* are seen in the way that is oriented by the theological conviction that the Scriptures bear a unified witness to the Logos. The distinction between an exegetical approach driven by theological convictions about the ultimate *referent*—‘these are they which testify of Me’<sup>9</sup>—and the *addressees* of the text—‘for our sakes, no doubt, this is written’<sup>10</sup>—and a particular allegorical *method* is an important one.

Writing about Christ’s opening of the Scriptures in Luke 24, Christopher Seitz makes a point that is quite apposite to our discussion of Origen when he remarks upon what the text does and does not say when ‘asserting the dominical referentiality of the Scriptures of Israel and ... the fact of these Scriptures being brokered by him as special teacher.’<sup>11</sup>

What is crucial to observe is *that just how that referentiality was spotted, and where it manifested itself*, is never declared in the plain sense of the NT witness. Luke 24 is decisive for indicating that such a “Christian reading” is available across the witness of the Old Testament and that the warrant for this comes from Christ himself, and also intrinsically from the old witness: it is a sense that is there; it is a sense that is disclosed for what it is; it is not a sense that is added on, exteriorly, *a posteriori*. The things about Christ are really there in Moses and all the prophets and Christ can point to them. But nowhere does the Gospel of Luke feel constrained to offer specific examples of just how the church of the risen Christ is meant exhaustively to know how the plain sense of the Old will yield up its treasures. This means that when Acts provides examples, it is following a more general warrant and not a specific template...<sup>12</sup>

Understanding the fundamental driving principle of Origen’s allegorical reading of Scripture to be this dominical mandate, rather than an alien system of hermeneutics imposed upon the text from without, its specifically Christian character will become more apparent, as will its continuity with the readings of the Old Testament encountered within the New.<sup>13</sup> A fixation upon exegetical

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<sup>9</sup> John 5:39

<sup>10</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:10b

<sup>11</sup> Seitz 2011, 143

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> ‘Origen’s critique of Jewish literalism, as well as its restricted counterpart in the Christian community, went far beyond a mere procedural assessment of philology. At its core, this critique concerned central Christian practices and beliefs. What elicited Origen’s censure was a handful of literal interpretations that squarely confronted and undermined central Christian convictions...’ Martens 2012, 160.

method can obscure this more theological fact. Similar problems arise when we treat the Apostle Paul's exegetical methods in a manner that isolates them both from the more variegated ways that the Old Testament is deployed as a witness to Christ within the New Testament and from the theological convictions about the referentiality of the Old Testament text that underlie all such uses.<sup>14</sup>

Louth maintains that, as allegory takes its bearings from the revealed mystery of Christ

...it can hardly be claimed that allegory is arbitrary: allegory is firmly related to the mystery of Christ, it is a way of relating the whole of Scripture to that mystery, a way of making a synthetic vision out of the images and events of the Biblical narrative. It does not *prove* anything, but it is not meant to. The Fathers always bring forward allegorical interpretations tentatively, they recognize that other ways of interpretation, other applications of the allegorical approach, are possible, that there are different ways in which Scripture can be rightly taken.<sup>15</sup>

One of the chief values of such allegorical readings, even when they are uncertain or somewhat fanciful, is that they inculcate and reinforce a distinctively Christian posture and its constellation of habits in relationship to the Scriptures, one embodying the conviction that Holy Scripture is a unified whole through which God speaks to us directly in the present, revealing the mystery of Christ.<sup>16</sup> Reading the Scriptures 'Christianly' involves proceeding from a hermeneutical posture rooted in this conviction.<sup>17</sup>

Louth distinguishes between two modes of allegory: *allegoria facti* and *allegoria verbi*.<sup>18</sup> As de Lubac emphasizes, while the latter is concerned with words, the former is concerned with deeds and events: 'Let us immediately, however, clarify that to discover this allegory, one will not find it properly speaking in the text, but in the realities of which the text speaks; not in history as recitation, but in history as event; or, if one wishes, allegory is indeed in the

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<sup>14</sup> Seitz 2011, 140-143

<sup>15</sup> Louth 1989, 121

<sup>16</sup> For an exploration of the principles informing patristic exegesis, see Brian Daley's essay in Davis & Hays 2003, 69-88. '[T]he concern of the ancient exegete was not simply, or even primarily, to reconstruct the *Sitz im Leben* of the text being studied but to elucidate its *Sitz in unserem Leben*, its situation in *our* life.' Ibid. 77.

<sup>17</sup> 'Radner pointedly asks whether we can maintain a vision of God's reality, of God's presence and activity in the world, *without* centering our faith on a sense of God's providence and a figural approach to the Bible essentially akin to those of the Fathers.' Ibid. 85.

<sup>18</sup> Louth 1989, 119. De Lubac 2000, 86-89.



recitation, but one that relates a real event.’<sup>19</sup> Where *allegoria verbi* is employed, it must operate on the foundation laid by *allegoria facti*: detached from this it is only ‘a freely created, merely literary, conceit.’<sup>20</sup> Even more extravagant instances of *allegoria verbi*—perhaps most commonly encountered in homiletical contexts—provided that they are attempts to discover the mystery of Christ, and are informed by the more fundamental *allegoria facti*, can serve a valuable purpose, as through their playful embroidering they reveal Christ.

## ***2. Reservations about Figural Readings***

The distinction between allegory and typology presented by Daniélou and others has been shown to be misleading, as the tradition includes Daniélou’s typology within its definition of allegory: indeed, according to Gregory the Great, allegory is the means by which we investigate types.<sup>21</sup> In light of this, many have preferred to speak of ‘figural’ readings, readings ‘in which a text is read as having a meaning beyond the ostensive one.’<sup>22</sup>

A number of the criticisms levelled against ‘allegorical’ readings have been answered, yet concerns remain. Although we have a dominical mandate to discover Christ within the Old Testament and are assured that he is really there, there is always a danger of this becoming a license to pursue readings in which the ostensive meaning of the text is obscured by or devalued on account of allegorical readings. At worst, the Old Testament can become like a palimpsest, the literal sense the faint underwriting beneath accumulated allegorical readings.

The playful excesses of allegory, whereby Christ is related to a dizzying array of details of Old Testament narratives with few criteria and controls whereby to distinguish and separate good readings from bad, little supporting argument, and weak standards of proof, are always in danger of ceasing to function as benign supplements, becoming a cancerous growth that threatens to overwhelm its host organism. Such a concern need not arise from a modern and objectivistic regard for ‘method’, but from recognition of the importance of demonstrating responsibility and accountability to the word of the text. When the

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<sup>19</sup> De Lubac 2000, 86

<sup>20</sup> Louth 1989, 119

<sup>21</sup> Wright 2009, 64

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. 75

exact manner in which the figural meaning of a particular text is supervenient upon and integrally related to its ostensive meaning is habitually left unclear or vague, the former can start to efface the latter and shake free from the sorts of controls and limits that the ostensive meaning would place upon it. The two meanings, while united in theory, can suffer a bifurcation in practice.

Louth writes:

The Old Testament builds up a context, a matrix, in which the mystery of Christ can be incarnated. To become man is not just a physical fact, but a cultural event: in the Old Testament the cultural matrix is developed in which this can be possible.<sup>23</sup>

One presumes that by this ‘matrix’ it is the historical realities described within the Old Testament that are being spoken of—the ostensive referents of the Old Testament text—rather than the allegorical meanings of the texts in question. A hermeneutical approach that allegorizes too readily in order to relate texts to the mystery of Christ risks creating a deracinated Christ, a Christ removed from this cultural matrix. The mystery of the incarnate Christ, rather than being discovered through careful attention to the means of his gestation within and preformation by the realities of the Old Testament, will be presumed to be already known in a manner independent of them. Rather than serving as the patient midwife of the text in its delivery of its spiritual meaning, a meaning established apart from it can easily be retrojected into it.

A related concern for the historical sense of the text is also present in Seitz, who writes:

One can spot a tension within the range of figural reading having to do with temporality, both in terms of the referential character of the scriptures in the past and also in terms of the eschatological force of the divine word to the church in the future, right up until the curtain of time is brought down and God is all in all. Taken as a broad statement, it might be said that Origen is more concerned with a present spiritual anagogy than with comprehending God’s temporal grasp of Israel in the past, or the church in and through time, under the lordship of one God who orders and disposes time itself.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Louth 1989, 120

<sup>24</sup> Seitz 2001, 9

Such an emphasis upon the continuity between the narratives of the Old and New Testaments, grounded upon God's own unity and the unity of his providential activity, gives a weight to the historical sense of the Old Testament Scriptures that, while not typically denied by allegorical readers, has historically often been at risk of suffering neglect.

The potential for fragmentation of the Scriptures involved in allegory—the loss of the providential and historical unity of the story of Israel and the Church—has tended to have its most pronounced effects at the seam between Old and New Testament. In his insightful and often stimulating defence of the patristic use of allegory, Louth summarizes Henri de Lubac's position: 'A twofold distinction between the literal and the allegorical, the letter and the spirit, shadow and reality, the old and the new: this is, in fact, de Lubac insists, the distinction between the two testaments, the old and the new—this is the fundamental contrast that lies behind the distinction between the literal and the allegorical.'<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, such a framing of the opposition between the Old and New Testaments has provided a systematic susceptibility to the development of what Peter Leithart has termed the 'semi-Marcionism of the tradition' within which the Old Testament was associated with the fleshly and material, the external and outward, with signs and forms, while the New Testament is spiritual, internal, and presents us with the reality.<sup>26</sup>

While there may be more felicitous ways in which de Lubac's opposition can be construed, and the remarks with which Louth follows it are helpful clarifications,<sup>27</sup> such modes of framing invite a depreciation of the Old Testament by virtue of a misleading set of contrasts. The letter-spirit contrast, found in 2 Corinthians 3:6, for instance, is not a distinction between the two written testaments, but one between the operation of the written Law under the old

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<sup>25</sup> Louth 1989, 117. 'In the entire preceding text of the epistle the Apostle had shown how the essence of religion has been transferred from the Jews to the Gentiles, from circumcision to faith, from the letter to the Spirit, from shadow to truth, from fleshly observance to spiritual observance.' Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 9.1.1 (Origen 2002, 191).

<sup>26</sup> Leithart 2003a, 32

<sup>27</sup> 'Understood like this, the movement to allegory is not at all a movement *away from* history, but we might say a movement *into* history, into the significance of the sacred events that are the object of our faith. The literal sense is the object of faith: this is what we are to believe, to believe *in*, in a God who meets us in history, becomes man in Jesus of Nazareth. The allegorical sense represents our attempt to understand the mystery we discern here. It is a movement from *fides* to *intelligentia*: de Lubac remarks that the context of the Augustinian 'fides quaerens intellectum' is mainly that of the interpretation of the Scriptures.' Louth 1989, 117-118.

covenant and the operation of the Spirit within the preaching of the gospel in the new.<sup>28</sup> By overlaying the letter-spirit opposition onto the division between the written testaments, there is a danger of downplaying the ‘spiritual sense’ of the Old Testament as a *distinct* witness to Christ, viewing that spiritual sense as something that is not truly integral and native to the text’s own historical witness but which relates, as it were, from without (for instance, as hermeneutically appropriated by the apostolic witness within the New Testament or the allegorizing theologian within the Church).<sup>29</sup> Such an opposition can also lead to the devaluation of the Spirit’s economy within the narrative and life of Israel. The continuity between the economy of the Spirit within the old covenant and the new can be minimized as the Old Testament and the covenantal economies that it describes are relegated to a supposed ante-pneumatological era of the letter.<sup>30</sup>

The shadow-reality opposition is also easily mischaracterized. Once again, this opposition is a scriptural one, alluded to in such places as Colossians 2:17, Hebrews 8:5, and 10:1. As with the letter-spirit opposition, the shadow-reality opposition needs to be carefully related to the two testaments. The scriptural shadow-reality distinction is between the body and climactic work of Christ in the heavens in the new covenant and the anticipatory ‘shadows’ of the old covenant operations of such things as the Levitical Law.<sup>31</sup> The ‘reality’ is not the New

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<sup>28</sup> Richard Hays (1989, 122-153) provides a scintillating reading of 2 Corinthians 3, which argues that Paul does present—and demonstrate—a hermeneutic in the chapter, albeit not one straightforwardly indicated in verse 6. I will reflect upon this reading in a later chapter.

<sup>29</sup> That such a problematic understanding is by no means essential to an allegorizing approach to the text can be illustrated by Saint Hilary’s helpful definition: ‘The Apostle teaches us to recognize, along with a veneration of the deeds, a pre-formation of the teaching and work of the spirit within them, since the Law is spiritual, while the accomplishments are things that are being allegorized.’ Cited in de Lubac 2000, 7. Saint Hilary’s teaching concerning the spirituality of the Law and the ‘pre-formation’ of the teaching and work of the Spirit within its realities corresponds to two of the key areas of concern that I will emphasize here. John David Dawson writes: ‘Such is the character of the classical figural claim that novel Christian figural meaning *extends without supplanting* the former Jewish meanings—that the spirit does not undermine but instead draws out the fullest meaning of the letter; the letter must remain in the spirit because the spirit is the letter fully realized.’ Dawson 2001, 217.

<sup>30</sup> An insistence upon the acknowledgement of the work of the Spirit within the old covenant need not entail a denial of the change in the economy of the Spirit following the Pentecost event. Pentecost is an intensification and extension of the work of the Spirit that was already operative under the old covenant. This climactic realization of the work of the Spirit is already anticipated in and continuous with such Old Testament accounts as those of the creation of humanity, the giving of the Law, the filling of the tabernacle and temple, the place of the Spirit of Moses upon the seventy elders in Numbers 11, the Spirit’s inner empowering of the judges and kings of Israel, and the calling and inspiration of the prophets.

<sup>31</sup> The typology of Hebrews 8:1-5, often characterized as ‘vertical,’ can be regarded as dualistic on this account by some, rendering type and antitype discontinuous. See Davidson 1984a & 1984b for an extensive discussion of this. However, Lincoln 2006, 43 writes: ‘What is significant for the

Testament text itself, but the historical and heavenly work and person of Christ. Nor is the ‘shadow’ the absolute absence of the ‘reality,’ but its anticipatory presence perceived under a different mode. The difference is between a single reality revealed ‘in shadow’ and ‘in reality’: notwithstanding this distinction, the reality is present and perceived in both cases.

The crux of the issue is that, in placing ‘reality’ on the side of the New Testament, a shared *res* between the testaments is obscured if not grievously attenuated.<sup>32</sup> This shared *res*, implicit in the traditional axiom *Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet, Vetus Testamentum in Novo patet*, becomes unclear when old covenant events, institutions, and the people formed by them are rendered as bare signs (‘letters’ and ‘shadows’) of a reality that is not already present and concealed within them. While one seldom if ever encounters the complete evacuation of a ‘spiritual’ *res* from the old covenant order, leaving naught but the husks of hollow signs, a denigration of the old covenant order has long been incipient in the tradition and in the frameworks whereby Old and New Testament are related, including in that offered by de Lubac.

In the previous chapter, I discussed Schmemmann and Chauvet’s distinctions between signs and symbols in some detail. The sign refers to something of a different order to itself and functions according to the logic of information.<sup>33</sup> The danger is that old covenant types, as earthly ‘letters’ and ‘shadows’, are reduced to little more than a formal similarity with and extrinsic relation to a new covenant *res*, functioning chiefly within the speculative order (which may itself be regarded as only truly operative retrospectively, from a new covenant vantage point).

This diminution of old covenant rituals to the level of external ‘signs’, held over against an internal ‘reality’, has also infected the understanding of new covenant sacraments in certain quarters, as Leithart observes.<sup>34</sup> Criticizing Calvin on this front, he writes:

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interpretation of Hebrews is that in this literature vertical and horizontal dimensions are found side by side, so that a restored Jerusalem and its Temple can be depicted both as the heavenly Jerusalem and Temple and as the Jerusalem and Temple which are to come to earth at the end.’ We will return to this point in due course.

<sup>32</sup> The question of the relationship between the testaments is one which we will give more attention to at a later point in this chapter.

<sup>33</sup> Chauvet 1995, 113, 118

<sup>34</sup> Leithart 2003a, 19-20; 2003c, 78-80. The exegesis of Galatians can often be the place where this infection occurs. For instance, it seems to me that, although he cautions against pressing ‘Paul’s

Calvin was fatally wrong in suggesting that this Galatianism was found wherever there is an emphasis on ritual *per se*. Calvin notwithstanding, the redemptive-historical move that the New Testament announces is not from ritual to non-ritual, from an Old Covenant economy of signs to a New Covenant economy beyond signs. The movement instead is from rituals and signs of distance and exclusion (the temple veil, cutting of the flesh, sacrificial smoke ascending to heaven, laws of cleanliness) to signs and rituals of inclusion and incorporation (the rent veil, the common baptismal bath, the common meal).

Rituals are as essential to the New Covenant order as to the Old; they are simply *different* rituals.<sup>35</sup>

Elsewhere, Leithart notes Augustine's use of a linguistic metaphor to maintain the relationship between the *res* of the old and new covenants—a reality obscured in some of Augustine's other writings<sup>36</sup>—comparing it to the way that

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distinction between faith and works into a dichotomy between faith and ritual,' stating that there is a 'distinction between outward and inward, ritual and spiritual, but no necessary antithesis' (Dunn 2006, 115), James Dunn is at risk of construing Paul's treatment of justification by faith in a manner that leads to a denigration of ritual *per se* and, by implication, to a 'spiritualizing' representation of the movement from old to new covenant that marginalizes some of the most prominent features of the former. He writes: 'Paul followed a different logic—the logic of justification by faith: *what is of grace through faith cannot depend in any sense, in any degree on a particular ritual response* (Ibid. 113, emphasis added).' While Paul is not taking aim at ritualism and activism *per se*, but at 'nationalism' (Ibid. 115), signaled by an attachment to the exclusionary boundary markers of circumcision and the food laws in the context of the advent of the time of covenant fulfilment, the fact that this case is advanced by pitting the 'logic of justification by faith' against an emphasis on ritual as such is revealing (as is the fact that covenant ritual is framed in terms of human 'response'). While Dunn may not place ritual and spiritual, outward and inward in antithesis, his argument proceeds in a manner that reduces rituals such as baptism and circumcision in significance, as the move from the old to new covenant administration is brought about in large measure through a dramatic relativization of the covenantal rituals, treating them as akin to an outward shell that can be shed, rather than as integral to the outworking of covenant and faith themselves. This reduction in significance may be hinted at in the way that Dunn refers to the rituals of the old covenant primarily in terms of sociological categories relating to race and nation, rather than in the theological terms of faith and covenant. Garlington 1994, 153n38 provides another example of a reading of Paul's Galatians argument that leads to a denigration of ritual *per se*.

<sup>35</sup> Leithart 2003c, 80. Where ritual vs. non-ritual or sign vs. reality oppositions have become prominent, perhaps it is not surprising that accounts of sacraments have become vague, yielding problems similar to those identified by Schmemann and Daniélou at the beginning of my first chapter, nondescript and deracinated rituals that could never be picked out in an identity parade. As an articulation of the difference and connection between the ritual or sign *as such* and the spiritual reality has become the chief site of sacramental discourse and understanding, the importance of the difference and connection between particular rituals, along with the value of the elements of sacramental rites within a wider symbolic system, has receded into the background of theological discourse. As these oppositions between ritual and sign and reality have so often imposed themselves upon the testamental division, the sacraments are either regarded with a measure of embarrassment as akin to living fossils of the old covenant age of signs or in a manner that weakens or neglects their roots in the symbolic nexus of the Old Testament, lest their relation to the spiritual reality appear dubious by virtue of such unrefined ancestry.

<sup>36</sup> Leithart (2003a, 34) mentions Augustine's discussion of Ambrose's allegorical preaching in *Confessions* 6.4.6 as one instance of this.

the same verbal root can appear in different tenses.<sup>37</sup> He suggests that, for Augustine, the ‘New is meaningful only by virtue of its *difference* from the Old,’ the two being held together within a unified symbolic order:<sup>38</sup>

...Augustine underscores his repeated insistence that sacramental “substance,” or, continuing the analogy, the “verbal root,” remains the same in both Testaments. Christ is the *Verbum* spoken, offered, and received in the word and sacraments of both Old and New. Moreover, just as a conjugation is not a transition from language to not-language but a transformation from one linguistic form to another, so also the transition from Old to New remains within the economy of linguistic and cultural signs.... New Covenant rites and signs are thus not grudging concessions to the weakness of the flesh but are necessary to develop redemptive themes in the symphony of universal history.<sup>39</sup>

The problems that have been outlined to this point are not present in all figural readings. Rather, they underline the importance of a careful account of temporality, exposing some of the flaws to which figural readings have often proved susceptible. Also, in revealing some of the faultlines that run between various forms of figural readings, I have set the scene for articulating where I stand relate to these issues at a later point in this chapter.

### ***3. Historicism and Biblical Criticism***

While an account of the importance of biblical typology and the place of time and history within it must defend itself against the collapsing of this dimension within some allegorical readings, by far the greater challenge to figural reading of the Scriptures over the last few centuries has come from higher biblical criticism and its attendant historicism. This challenge has resulted in a dramatic shift in the reading of the Scriptures and has called many of the principal convictions upon which figural reading of the Old Testament rests into direct question.

Historical criticism has had the effect of reframing and refocusing our conception of biblical texts through elaborate theories of their origins and

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid. 36-39

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. 38

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. 37-38

development.<sup>40</sup> The unity of the biblical texts, upon which assumption figural reading once operated, was called into question as the fabric of Pentateuch and other Old Testament texts were unravelled into different sources, which were resituated within a *religionsgeschichte* account of development existing behind the text. This new narrative of religious development took the place of the narrative recorded within the scriptural texts and placed their reliability under radical suspicion.

The origin and effects of the split that historical criticism occasioned between the literal sense of the text and its historical referent have been explored in detail by such as Hans Frei.<sup>41</sup> Pre-critical readers of the Bible understood themselves to live within the world of the Bible's 'realistic narrative', a world with a coherent storyline, the 'history-likeness' of the literal sense of the text being identified with 'ostensive reference' to actual history.<sup>42</sup> When the Bible is read in such a manner, a figural sense develops organically out of the literal sense, as individual stories are related to the larger narrative sequence of Holy Scripture, within which they are situated.<sup>43</sup>

The 'eclipse' of biblical narrative which Frei discusses occurs as the 'world' to which the text makes reference starts to take priority over the 'world' that the text itself renders. This shift does not necessarily involve a denial of the historicity of the Bible, but a separation of the 'depicted biblical world' and the 'real historical world', even when the two worlds were related in such a manner as to demonstrate the Bible's agreement with the facts of science and history.<sup>44</sup> It is the developing gap between narrative and reality—irrespective of whether that gap was bridged—that marks the 'eclipse'. The meaning of biblical narratives, true or not, is something increasingly abstracted from the narratives themselves: 'their meaning is nonetheless referable to an external more general context, and the story now has to be interpreted into it, rather than that external pattern of meaning being incorporated—figurally or in some other way—into the story.'<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Seitz 2001, 83

<sup>41</sup> Frei 1974

<sup>42</sup> Frei 1974, 12

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. 28: 'With regard to its own depicted time span, each narrative is literally descriptive; of the whole sequence and its coherence in theme as well as time, all of them together form one literal narrative, by means of earlier and later stories becoming figures one of the other.'

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. 5

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. 6



This reversal of the direction of interpretation proved disastrous for figural reading. It was now the patterns and principals of the ‘real historical world’ as distinct from the biblical text that set the terms for the reading of the Scriptures. In the harsh climate of this growing historicism, figural reading of the Scripture withered. While the biblical narrative world had retained its priority, figural readings had served the purpose of extending this world to encompass the world of its readers and enabling its readers to discover themselves within it. However, with the reversal of this interpretative polarity the demand for figural reading faded: it was now the ‘real historical world’ that took priority in the relationship and in terms of which the biblical narrative had to be situated.<sup>46</sup> Figural readings also offended the developing literal and historical sensibilities:

As a literary or (more basically) logical device, figuration offended against the elementary assumption that a propositional statement has only one meaning. As a historical argument (i.e. that the Old Testament contained prophecies specifically referring to and fulfilled in Jesus Christ), it strained credulity beyond the breaking point by the suggestion that sayings and events of one day referred predictively to specific persons and events hundreds of years later.<sup>47</sup>

The priority given to the ‘real historical world’ led to a privileging of the ‘source’ over all else. When it came to the biblical text, this resulted in a depreciation of the final canonical form and a focus upon historical referents and the history ‘behind’ the text over the ‘realistic narrative’ of the text itself in its final canonical form. Under such pressures, the text crumbled into its putative sources, leaving little foundation for ‘realistic narrative’.

It is important to recognize that, although the undermining of biblical narrative was most pronounced in the context of liberalism, the underlying malaise was shared by many of the most conservative of theologians: they too abstracted the meaning of the Scriptures from the canonical narrative and gave

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<sup>46</sup> The relationship between these new sensibilities in the area of biblical reading and the ascent of secular reason and power should be noted, as it is by John Milbank: ‘Above all, it is *allegory* that must be banished, because this traditional mode of interpretation located transcendent significance in the historical-textual syncopes between old and new covenant, and in turn between these, ecclesial time and the *eschaton*.... Both allegory and ‘scholastic’ interpolations were banished by Hobbes and Spinoza because they implied an uncontrollable proliferation of Christocentric meaning which inserted divine communication into the process of human historical becoming and must forever escape from sovereign mastery.’ Milbank 1990, 19-20.

<sup>47</sup> Frei 1974, 6

priority to the ‘real historical world’ in its framing. While biblical criticism might seem to have been the greatest threat to biblical narrative, it was historicism’s account of temporality and narrative that fuelled it that was the deeper problem.

Within theologically conservative contexts, this historicism manifests itself in such things as the emphasis placed upon the quest for the ‘historical Jesus’, the Jesus behind the ‘Christ of faith’ we encounter in the gospels.<sup>48</sup> It can also be witnessed in the use of moralizing, spiritualizing, and ‘figurative’ (as distinct from figural) readings of the canonical Scriptures, most commonly witnessed in the context of preaching, where a grammatical-historical reading of the text leads to metaphorical applications to the lives of the hearers—a precarious anagogy spanning the gulf between the world of the biblical narrative and the real historical world that we inhabit.<sup>49</sup> Seitz sums up the problem:

Historicism has given us a Bible that points beyond itself to a vast, complex, developmental, ever-changing continuum in time and space. Historicism insists the past become truly *past*, distinguished from the present, except by means of human analogy, ingenious application, or a piety resistant to historicism’s acids.<sup>50</sup>

#### ***4. The Recovery of Biblical Narrative and Typology***

A post-critical recovery of biblical narrative requires that we address the threat of historicism. This threat has been dealt with in various ways. While Frei’s own approach reversed historicism’s direction of interpretation, the issue of extratextual referentiality remained somewhat unclear, especially within the broader context of postliberalism. Frei did not wish to deny extratextual referentiality, yet his proposal served more to establish a theological barrier against the influx of the tide of historical criticism than as a substantial response to its challenge. Through the strategic erection of this defence, theological reading of Scripture could proceed unthreatened: land could be ceded to the waves of criticism without fear of all collapsing into the sea.

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<sup>48</sup> Seitz 2001, 7. The growing emphasis upon the category of ‘testimony’ in the work of such as Richard Bauckham (2006) strikes me as a salutary development in this area.

<sup>49</sup> Seitz 2001, 8. ‘To draw some abstract or general moral, such as ‘we should not be greedy,’ adds nothing to the story and indeed detracts from it, for it is weaker in every way than the biblical text. Such moralizing implies that the content of the story is separable from the fact that it is a story, and entirely fails to recognize the power of narrative and of the imagination.’ Moberly 1998, 23.

<sup>50</sup> Seitz 2001, 9

There is room for various accounts of extratextual referentiality within the general approach suggested by Frei and adopted within postliberalism. Frei addressed concerns about his supposed neglect on this front, insisting that he believed the biblical text to be an actual and sufficient witness, but admitting to a certain degree of agnosticism about exactly how extratextual referentiality operated:

For example, using the term “God” Christianly is in some sense referential. But that doesn’t mean that I have a theory of reference to be able to tell you *how* it refers.<sup>51</sup>

George Hunsinger writes of Frei’s understanding of referentiality: ‘What Frei meant is surely captured, however, by Francis Watson, who has defined “intratextual realism” as “the irreducibly textual mediation of realities that nonetheless precede and transcend their textual embodiment.”’<sup>52</sup> The agnosticism that Frei and others advance about the text’s mode of referentiality places an obstacle in the way of all attempts to get behind it. Knowing *that* the text refers, but not exactly *how* it refers, we must content ourselves with its truthful witness. Approaches such as Frei’s have enabled postliberal interpreters (of whom Karl Barth is a great example) to advance readings of the text that maintain a theological reference, while assuming the validity of biblical criticism and resisting a naïve pre-critical emphasis upon exact historical correspondence.<sup>53</sup>

The revalorization of narrative, often following in the wake of Frei’s presentation of Scripture in the mould of a realistic novel, can also give a new impetus to intratextual and literary readings of Scripture, readings for which questions of historical referentiality may only be of peripheral concern.<sup>54</sup> This does not mean that such intratextual and intertextual readings completely lack engagement with the historical critical tradition or relevance to their debates, just that the questions of the historical critical tradition largely fall outside of their purview.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Frei 1993, 210

<sup>52</sup> Vanhoozer 2003, 48

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. 48-49

<sup>54</sup> Childs 1993, 18-20

<sup>55</sup> See, for instance, the discussion in Alter 1981, 23ff. and his later pressing of the concept of convention and type-scene against biblical critics’ presumption of an *ur*-story underlying repeated accounts (48ff.).

A focus upon the final form of the text of a slightly different variety can be encountered in the work of Brevard Childs. Childs is scathing in his treatment of readings that retreat into literary criticism: the issue of historical referentiality, while unresolved, must not be avoided as it is essential to Christianity.<sup>56</sup> The relationship between the text of Scripture and history is of inescapable importance.<sup>57</sup> The ‘canonical approach’ offered by Childs does not sideline historical criticism, but takes the Scripture in the final form of the ‘canon’, within which books are held together within a great whole, to be the most determinative reality and the primary object of our study, leaving historical criticism with a more modest role to play.<sup>58</sup> In such a manner, while recognizing the importance of its questions, Childs resists historicism’s impulse to try to get behind the text and to value origins and sources over all else. Our study of the text is not reduced to intratextuality, but recognizes that both historical referentiality and the historical development of the text itself are matters that call for our investigation.<sup>59</sup>

In contrast to more literary approaches, the canonical approach has a fuller account of the importance of the diachronic character of Scripture, whether in its historical development or in the relationship between its constituent parts, most particularly the Old and New Testaments. The account of the relationship between Old and New Testament provided within the canonical approach is a nuanced one and is worthy of closer attention.

Childs is concerned to maintain the ‘discrete voice’ of the Old Testament and its texts.<sup>60</sup> The danger of the drowning out of this voice can come from various quarters: from the sorts of allegorical or even figural readings discussed

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<sup>56</sup> ‘It is one thing to suggest that biblical scholars have not adequately resolved the problem of biblical referentiality; it is quite another to suggest that it is a non-issue. Moreover, I would argue that the attempt of many literary critics to by-pass the problem of biblical reality and refuse to distinguish between the text and the reality of its subject matter severely cripples the theological enterprise of Biblical Theology. It is basic to Christian theology to reckon with an extra-biblical reality, namely with the resurrected Christ who evoked the New Testament witness. When H. Frei, in one of his last essays, spoke of ‘midrash’ as a text-creating reality, he moved in a direction, in my opinion, which for Christian theology can only end in failure (‘The Literal Reading’).’ Childs 1993, 20.

<sup>57</sup> Seitz 2011, 31 writes of Childs’ canonical approach: ‘It does not deny the historical dimension as crucial to what makes biblical texts something other than modern literature, nor the text’s inherent relationship to time and space and what has been called “ostensive reference,” even as it has a view of history that is far more than this.’

<sup>58</sup> Seitz 2011, 29

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. 38

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. 55ff.

earlier, from Christian theology and dogmatics, or from the pages of the New Testament.<sup>61</sup> Yet this concern to hear the Old Testament on its own terms does not lead to a denial of the legitimacy of the readings described above. Childs exhibits a marked sympathy for Christian precritical readings of the Old Testament text, even as he resists their tendency to lose sight of the discreteness of its voice.

The canonical approach stands in contrast to a number of approaches to the reading of the Old Testament and the relating of the two testaments. First, it contrasts with attempts to give priority to the historical critical framing of biblical books and their material, stressing the importance of the canonical form.<sup>62</sup> Second, it resists emphases on the complete detachment of the Old Testament from the New Testament witness, accounts of the Old Testament that would prevent it from being read as *Christian* Scripture or which would invalidate the sorts of readings of the Old Testament that we encounter within the New.<sup>63</sup> Third, while recognizing the way that the Old Testament's own voice constrains and shapes the New Testament's readings of it, it retains the 'space between the New's hearing of the Old and the Old's plain sense,' seeking carefully to understand the meaning of that space, rather than to fuse the two voices.<sup>64</sup>

Finally, it stands over against approaches that would subject or limit the reading of the Old Testament to its reception within the New.<sup>65</sup> This particular

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> See, for instance, Childs' discussion of the canonical form of the book of Isaiah (Childs 1979, 325-338).

<sup>63</sup> Seitz 2011, 55

<sup>64</sup> Ibid. 60-62. Seitz has an illuminating engagement with Francis Watson on these issues, suggesting that Watson is in danger of producing a 'single conflated agreement across the Testaments' (Ibid. 62). Watson is concerned to ensure that 'Scripture is not a secondary confirmation of a Christ-event entire and complete in itself; for scripture is not external to the Christ-event but is constitutive of it, the matrix within which it takes shape and comes to be what it is' (Watson 2004, 16-17). He writes: 'It is scripture that shapes the contours of the Christ-event, and to discern how it does so is to uncover the true meaning of scripture itself' (Ibid. 17, emphasis added). While Watson brings Old and New Testaments into the closest of relations in their twofold witness to the Christ event, however, a distinction remains between the apostolic and the prophetic modes of witness (Ibid. 38-39, 519). Seitz, however, suggests that the 'indirectness' that Watson claims is characteristic of the prophetic witness is founded on the basis of the ascription of certain 'mental states' to the prophets, rather than to the canonical sense of the text itself, resulting in a loss of a sense of the Old Testament's 'intrinsic' and not merely 'retrospective' canonical witness to Christ (Seitz 2011, 144-145).

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. 54. 'The NT becomes the ultimate phase of reception history, to be directly imitated by the church, instead of a canonical witness in complex relationship with the first witness, that is, the one that gives it foundation and continues to speak forth in its own special idiom of Christian theological reflection. That the NT uses and depends upon the first witness is not a warrant for a

point cuts in a number of directions. It prevents the collapsing of the meaning of Old Testament texts into the sense given to them in the New: ‘The OT, read and interpreted by Paul ... never disappears: its plain sense remains what it is.’<sup>66</sup> It also ensures that the Old Testament’s voice is encountered as Christian Scripture and as canonical witness to Christ, even apart from the New Testament’s reading of it.<sup>67</sup>

Childs suggests ‘three levels of reading the OT that the very nature of the text requires: historical, literary, and canonical.’<sup>68</sup> While the second level of reading—the literary—is ‘an exegetical and theological enterprise which seeks to pursue a relationship of content,’ it is only at the third level that the Old Testament is read as a direct witness to Jesus Christ.<sup>69</sup> This reading is not just a subjective imposition upon the text, a forced or extrinsic reading of it, or a figurative or metaphorical use of it to address unrelated realities, but is one that occurs in the light of the reality of Christ to which the text witnesses.<sup>70</sup>

Ignacio Carbajosa, in characterizing this position, argues that ‘it can thus be clearly seen that the witness of the OT is not *dispensable*, as if it could be eliminated once the event of Christ who comes to fulfil it has been manifested.’<sup>71</sup> It is in the *correspondence* between the Old Testament Scriptures and the risen Christ that both are illumined. One could compare this relationship to that effected by the ancient *symbolon*, discussed in the previous chapter.

Carbajosa presents us with another recent example of an attempt to address the legacy of biblical criticism from a postcritical standpoint. Carbajosa, developing a line of inquiry first suggested by Joseph Ratzinger, argues that historical criticism needs to subject itself to its own method:

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developmental understanding that threatens to void the ontological theological claims of the first.’ Ibid. 94n1.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. 108. At this point, I recall Rémi Brague’s stimulating discussion of medieval Christian Europe as a culture of ‘inclusion’ rather than of ‘digestion’, exemplified in the two testament character of its Bible (Brague 2009, 155-156).

<sup>67</sup> In the area of typology, the New Testament’s limitation of the Christian reading of the Old Testament has occasionally taken the form of resistance to discovering Christian typology within texts that are not explicitly presented as types within the New Testament itself (Fairburn 2000, 17-20). The story of the betrayal and death of Samson is an example of a text that would appear to invite a typological reading (which would relate it to the betrayal and crucifixion of Christ), but which is not read in such a manner within the New Testament.

<sup>68</sup> Carbajosa 2013, 226

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. Childs argues that this reading goes beyond the Old Testament’s own prophetic reference to a coming Messiah (Ibid. 227).

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. 227-228

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. 231

What we need is a criticism of the criticism. We cannot develop it from the outside, however, but only from the inside, from critical thought's own potential for self-criticism: a self-critique of historical exegesis that can be expanded into a critique of historical reason that both carries on and modifies Kant's critiques of reason.<sup>72</sup>

Carbajosa provides such a 'criticism of the criticism', through a diachronic reading of historical criticism's own development. What emerges is the fact that the supposedly 'objective' scientific findings of historical criticism were much shaped by ideologies that were far from objective.<sup>73</sup> Carbajosa draws attention for the need to incorporate faith—which corresponds to revelation as its proper response—into the foundations of biblical exegesis, rather than developing it as a second storey upon a supposedly objective historical science.<sup>74</sup> The ideologically weighted character of the supposed neutral historical method results in an unwarranted and dangerous heterogeneity between the historical foundations of Christian reading of the Scriptures and the theological superstructure.

Carbajosa's approach has a number of significant consequences. Historical criticism is chastened in its supposed objectivity and its dominion is curtailed. The final form of the canonical text is revalorized against the historicism that would reduce all to sources and origins. The historical critical method, while not abandoned, is leavened by a theological appropriation of Scripture as revelation. Intratextual and intertextual readings of the text are granted a new prominence. Meaning is no longer abstracted from the forms of narrative and testimony, but is located within them. More subtle accounts of referentiality are adopted. The Old Testament is reclaimed as Christian Scripture. Within such a context, the field is set for a recovery of figural readings.

The postcritical figural readings offered by Childs and others involve a half-turn back to precritical readings.<sup>75</sup> They move beyond *Heilgeschichte's* unsophisticated account of biblical referentiality, the unidirectional trajectory in its account of the relationship between Old and New Testaments, and its

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<sup>72</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, cited in *Ibid.* 19-20.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* 248

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* 194, 212-213

<sup>75</sup> See the appreciative discussion of precritical readings of Scripture in Childs 1993, 30-51.

historicist location of meaning behind the biblical texts.<sup>76</sup> In contrast to the spiritualizing, moralizing, and tenuous anagogies of many homiletical readings of the biblical text, which presuppose the divorce of the real historical world and the narrative world of the text, it upholds the unity of the Scriptures and the continuity of God's providential shaping of his people throughout Old and New Testaments and into the life of the Church.<sup>77</sup>

### 5. *Typology and Time*

Jean Daniélou identifies three categories of types within the Old Testament: 'The types of the Old Testament are persons, such as Noe or Isaac; events, such as the crossing of the Red Sea or the entrance into the Promised Land; and also institutions, such as the Temple, or circumcision.'<sup>78</sup> Of these three categories, it is perhaps only within the category of event that a temporal aspect is foregrounded.<sup>79</sup> Even though such types are 'horizontally' related to their antitypes (in contrast to what some term the temple's 'vertical' typological relationship with the heavenly temple), the depth of their temporal roots and the extent of their temporal nature can easily go unrecognized.

Persons, institutions, and events are inseparably intertwined in biblical typology. A person such as Noah and an 'institution' such as the rainbow cannot

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid. 16-18

<sup>77</sup> 'The overwhelming presumption of classical Christian figural reading ... is that the Christian Bible is read Christianly when it is seen to depict the ongoing historical outworkings of a divine intention to transform humanity over the course of time. Moreover, Christian figural readers insist that the history of Israel, Jesus of Nazareth, his immediate followers, and the Church are all somehow ingredients in this overarching divine intention.... Figural readers turn to the text of the Bible for clues and models useful for unravelling as much as they can of what they think they discern as the mysterious working of God in the lives of people over time. What is always ultimately at stake is the reality and the proper characterization of a divine performance in the material world of space and time, a performance that defines the personal, social, ethical, and political obligations of Christians in the present, as well as their stance toward past and future.' Dawson 2001, 216.

<sup>78</sup> Daniélou 1956, 222-223. This description of typology is fairly conventional. David Baker (cited in Porter and Evans 2004, 76), for instance, writes as follows: 'A *type* is a biblical event, person or institution which serves as an example or pattern for other events, persons or institutions; *typology* is the study of types and the historical and theological correspondences between them; the *basis* of typology is God's consistent activity in the history of his chosen people.' While I believe that these descriptions are quite serviceable, in what follows I will be emphasizing both the integrated character of biblical typology and its progressive development.

<sup>79</sup> Daniélou proceeds to speak of the Sabbath as an institution relating to time and history, claiming that it performs a similar role to that which the temple serves in relation to space (1956, 223). However, as I will go on demonstrate, this understates the importance of the institution of the tabernacle in its relationship to time.



be detached from the event of the Flood. Indeed, to speak of a person such as Noah in abstraction from the event of the Flood or a person such as Moses in abstraction from the events of the Exodus and the giving of the Torah is to court absurdity.

Typological persons are not such as atemporal subjectivities but as those who represent specific personal narratives.<sup>80</sup> The typological person does not merely occupy a unique punctiliar situation in time, but also possesses an ordered history of their own: temporality is intrinsically constitutive of the person.<sup>81</sup> Likewise, institutions are also typically temporal in their significance. They can serve as memorials or recapitulations of past events, such as the Passover, the Eucharist, or the law of the firstborn (Exodus 13:11-16). In addition to this they can be means of securing succession and continuation, ensuring that a past event remains a living and enduring reality within the life of a community.

While Daniélou discusses the purpose of the temple primarily in relation to space as opposed to time,<sup>82</sup> it is worth reflecting upon the manner in which such a characterization can present a limited and distorting perspective. In my first chapter, I referred to Michel De Certeau's distinction between the map and the itinerary. Both the map and the itinerary involve the negotiation of space. However, only the map abstracts space from time. As an institution, the tabernacle—and the temple after it—ordered space by means of itineraries, relating places together through temporal processes. These temporal processes operated in various forms and on different levels, not least through the triannual pilgrimage festivals and the daily 'itineraries' of ritual sacrifice.<sup>83</sup> These temporal

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<sup>80</sup> For instance, the significance of Adam as a type arises from the fact that the original creation of humanity out of the earth, the creation of the woman from the man's side, and the Fall of the human race are events within *his* narrative and that all other human narratives spring out of his.

<sup>81</sup> On occasions they can also represent larger histories that they originate or epitomize, as Moses stands for the administration of the Torah or as David for his dynasty and kingdom.

<sup>82</sup> Daniélou 1956, 223

<sup>83</sup> Bourdieu's remarks about the importance of time in the process of gift exchange, quoted in the previous chapter, have relevance to any discussion of ritual and sacraments. The 'telescoping' effect that Bourdieu describes, whereby a temporal sequence is collapsed into a single 'instant' can also afflict our analysis of rituals such as those of the Levitical system or the sacraments of the Church. An exclusive preoccupation with the new states of affairs resulting from the 'exchange' of ritual can, however, be obfuscating as it proceeds without cognizance of the significance of the irreducibly temporal movements whereby the new states of affairs are realized. In regard to the sacrifices of the Levitical system, for instance, they must be apprehended, not only as occasioned or recurring processes of temporal *duration*, but also as ordered and irreversible ritual *sequences*. The importance of Bourdieu's point in relation to my treatment of baptism will become more apparent as the argument of this thesis develops.

processes by means of which *places* were related were in turn means by which *times* were marked out, through daily sacrifices and the festal calendar.

The navigation and ordering of space by means of itineraries can also be witnessed in the original instructions for the building of the tabernacle, which take the form of a sequential narration of the building process, rather than a map-like architectural plan. As in the case of the original creation of the cosmos, the completed object of the tabernacle is not the sole object of interest. The extensive and carefully ordered sequence of the tabernacle's creation, like the days of creation, is accorded significance in itself. Indeed, the directions for the construction of the tabernacle in Exodus 25-30 and the description of its building in Exodus 40 might relate it to the days of the creation week: there are initial stages of forming (marked out by phrases referring to the 'pattern': 25:9, 40; 26:30; 27:8), followed by corresponding stages of filling and ordaining (marked out by phrases referring to 'ordinance'/'generation': 27:21; 28:43; 29:9; 30:10).<sup>84</sup>

As an institution, the meaning of the tabernacle should also be related to the event of the Sinai theophany, serving as a means of its continuation into the future life of the nation.<sup>85</sup> The divisions of the tabernacle could be seen to correspond to the distinct levels of access to YHWH's presence on the mountain, which in turn relate to the cosmology of Genesis 1.<sup>86</sup> In addition to the dimensions of temporal significance already mentioned, the tabernacle and the two temples that follow it have their own narrative threads within the larger story of Israel. Such a perspective upon the tabernacle and temple reveals that they both operate in a dynamically temporal manner, connecting Israel with the fundamental events of Sinai and ensuring that this past history remains a constitutive reality for the nation.

Given the intrinsically temporal and dynamic character of the elements of typology, figural readings are less likely to assume the character of establishing correspondences and resemblances between static elements—Old Testament 'types' and New Testament 'antitypes'—and are more likely to take the character of tracing spiritual itineraries, processes of providential transformation, of

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<sup>84</sup> Garver 1993

<sup>85</sup> Childs 1974, 540

<sup>86</sup> Beale 2004, 31ff., 105

movement towards Christ, processes within which we now find ourselves implicated.

### *6. Intratestamental Development*

In my opening chapter I argued for the benefits of moving from the sort of implicitly spatializing or atemporal frameworks within which gift exchange, symbols, and types can be discussed, adopting new frameworks which are alert to the significance of time in their stead. I presented a case for the benefits of musical analogies in particular, observing the manner in which music provides us with a metaphorical handle upon many temporal aspects of things such as typology that might otherwise go unnoticed. One such dimension of typology that might assume a greater prominence and degree of clarity as we adopt such a framework is that of the presence and development of typology within the Old Testament itself.

‘Typical’ elements within biblical narratives have received considerably more attention over recent decades, with a growth of synchronic literary readings of Old Testament texts. Robert Alter, in discussing the literary artistry of the biblical texts, extensively explores the use of ‘type-scenes’ and repetition. What was dismissed by many as repetition indicative of multiple sources, Alter argues was a matter of conventional ‘type-scenes’.<sup>87</sup> Once the role played by convention is appreciated, Alter maintains, attempts to homogenize the details of disparate narratives to obtain some putative ‘*ur-story*’ are revealed to be misguided.<sup>88</sup> It is as each narrative articulates itself against the foil of the conventional ‘type-scene’ that its unique meaning emerges.

Such a model of repetition with variation encourages us to attend both to the differences and the similarities between narratives and to recognize the significance of both:

As modern readers of the Bible, we need to relearn something of this mode of perception that was second nature to the original audiences. Instead of relegating every perceived recurrence in the text to the limbo of duplicated sources or fixed folkloric archetypes, we may begin to see that the resurgence of certain pronounced patterns at certain narrative junctures

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<sup>87</sup> Alter 1981, 50

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. 48-50

was conventionally anticipated, even counted on, and that against that ground of anticipation the biblical authors set words, motifs, themes, personages, and actions into an elaborate dance of significant innovation. For much of art lies in the shifting aperture between the shadowy foreimage in the anticipating mind of the observer and the realized revelatory image in the work itself, and that is what we must learn to perceive more finely in the Bible.<sup>89</sup>

It is thus in the interplay between the template of narrative conventions and the particularities of individual texts that much literary meaning occurs. A ‘fixed constellation of predetermined motifs’ is manipulated in order to produce the specific meaning of a particular text.<sup>90</sup>

However, for the most part, Alter’s literary reading of the text, while highlighting ‘typical’ or ‘conventional’ dimensions of biblical narratives is only incipiently ‘typological’ in the sense that I will be developing here. Alter’s literary reading, being predominantly intratextual and synchronic, will also tend to downplay extratextual historical referentiality and development within the ‘realistic narrative’ of the Scriptures. The literary relations that Alter emphasizes need to be complemented by a more theological account of the role that they are playing, identifying them as the lineaments of deeper theological relationships.

While he does not develop it in detail, Alter himself gestures towards such an account:

In all of this, of course, we must keep in mind that what we are witnessing is not merely the technical manipulation of a literary convention for the sheer pleasure of play with the convention, though ... significant playful activity on the part of the Hebrew writers should by no means be discounted, even in these sacred texts. The type-scene is not merely a way of formally recognizing a particular kind of narrative moment; it is also a means of attaching that moment to a larger pattern of historical and theological meaning.<sup>91</sup>

Alter proceeds to claim that such type-scenes as those that he identifies can ‘provide certain paradigmatic traits for the future historical destiny of Israel,’ associating future events and persons with ‘crucial junctures’ of the founding stories. While his chief emphasis, in challenging those who would devalue

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid. 62

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. 51

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. 59-60

narratives on account of their repetition, has been placed upon the variations between them and their distinctness, he also believes that repetition is of great significance: 'The fact of recurrence, however, is as important as the presence of innovation in the use of the type-scene; and the convention itself, the origins of which may well antecede biblical monotheism, has been made to serve an eminently monotheistic purpose: to reproduce in narrative the recurrent rhythm of a divinely appointed destiny in Israelite history.'<sup>92</sup>

While the 'type-scene' can be conceived of as a culturally conventional narrative pattern employed by biblical authors, standing behind and apart from the biblical text,<sup>93</sup> in speaking of 'typology' we are speaking of something that is more native to the biblical texts, of conventions that find their roots within the Scriptures themselves. In such typology, it is biblical archetypes that are explored and that provide the conventions for new narratives. While the use of extra-biblical literary conventions such as culturally recognized 'type-scenes' relate groups of biblical narratives by means of a literary pattern outside of the text, typology is more akin to tracing the developing generations of a particular family from their first origins.

A good example of this is the story of the fall of humanity in Genesis 3. This foundational narrative provides the archetype in terms of which a number of other 'fall narratives' are narrated.

In Genesis 9, a new creation is established after the flood and God makes a covenant with Noah and his descendants, blessing them and setting them over the rest of the animal creation in a manner similar to the original creation account in Genesis 1.<sup>94</sup> Like Adam was originally called to, Noah takes up the role of a gardener and the cultivator of fruit, planting a vineyard (Genesis 9:20). This new 'garden', like the Garden of Eden before it, becomes the site of a fall. There are several echoes of the Genesis 3 account in 9:20-27. The fruit is taken and ingested (v.21), there is a revelation of nakedness (vv.22-23), covering up with clothing (v.23), the realization of knowledge (v.24), a curse on the seditious tempter

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid. 60

<sup>93</sup> Such an understanding of the 'type-scene' is suggested by Alter's discussion in such places as Ibid. 49.

<sup>94</sup> In Genesis 9:3-7 (cf. 1:27-29) we see that, perhaps unlike Adam, Noah and his sons are also given the right to eat meat and the political authorization to enact God's vengeance upon the murderer, suggesting progression and not only repetition.

(v.25), and a judgment (in this case positive) on the two other protagonists (v.26-27).

The fall narrative pattern is taken up again in Genesis 16. Once again, a new covenant order has just been established, along with the promise of fruitfulness and multiplication (15:5, 18-21). Seeking to resolve the problem of Sarai's barrenness, Sarai offered Abram Hagar, her Egyptian maidservant, intending her to be a surrogate mother. The story of Genesis 16 is deeply redolent of the Fall narrative. The woman (Sarai) offers her husband something (or in this case *someone*—Hagar) that is desirable to obtain a good end (getting offspring). The husband 'heeded the voice of his wife' (v.2; cf. 3:17). The woman takes and gives to her husband, who partakes. There is then the opening of eyes, as Sarai becomes despised in Hagar's eyes (v.4), a revelation of shame or nakedness ('when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes'—v.5), judgment, followed by expulsion or departure from the 'garden' (as Hagar flees from her harsh mistress).

Another 'fall narrative' can be found in Genesis 25. In 25:26, Jacob comes out of the womb of Rebekah grasping the heel of his brother—like the serpent bruises the heel of the seed of the woman in Genesis 3:15—and is named 'the one who takes the heel' or 'supplanter'. Coming in from the field, Esau begs for some of the 'red, red thing' that Jacob is cooking. David Daube has suggested that Esau thinks that Jacob is cooking a blood stew, forbidden food according to Genesis 9:4.<sup>95</sup> We are then immediately told that Esau's name was called 'Edom' (אֶדוֹם) on this account, a name whose similarity to 'Adam' (אָדָם) should not pass unnoticed. Jacob, playing the part of the serpent, offers the supposedly forbidden food in exchange for Esau's birthright. The pivotal character of this narrative is stressed by Calum Carmichael:

Esau's sale of his birthright to Jacob is the foundational event in the history of the nation. All later developments about Israel's rescue from Egypt as God's firstborn son, and Israel's religious and sacrificial life as centred on the Levites representing that firstborn son (Num 3:40-51), begin with the episode in Genesis 25.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Daube 1947, 193-195

<sup>96</sup> Carmichael 2012, 105

A further ‘fall narrative’ is found in Exodus 32. The Law has just been given to Moses on Sinai, establishing a new covenant order. However, as Moses descends the mountain he discovers the covenant has already been broken. Just as God inquired of the one given the priestly charge to guard and to keep, Adam, in Genesis 3, Moses—who was as YHWH to Aaron (Exodus 4:16)—asks Aaron, the one with the priestly responsibility, what he has done. Aaron, like Adam, blames the ‘bride’ for tempting him (32:21-24; cf. Genesis 3:9-12). Moses sees that the people are naked (‘unrestrained’ v.25) and that they have rendered themselves shameful before their enemies (cf. Genesis 3:9-11).

Moses then did what God did in Genesis 3. When Adam, the priestly guardian of the sanctuary of Eden, fell, God drove him from the Garden and established sword-wielding guardians to take his place (Genesis 3:24). In Exodus 32, Moses calls those on YHWH’s side to rally to him and they are established as the sword-wielding avenging angels of the covenant. The Levites are set apart and take the place corresponding to that of the cherubim in Genesis 3, guarding the sanctuary and being men of sword and flame. Instead of driving Israel out from the camp like Adam and Eve from the Garden, however, YHWH left the camp (33:7-11). The golden calf incident at Sinai plays a role in the story of Israel analogous to that of the original fall and so the use of a related narrative framing should not surprise us.

These ‘fall narratives’, while repeating a fundamental pattern, exhibit considerable individuality.<sup>97</sup> The roles of the various protagonists in the narratives vary quite markedly:<sup>98</sup> the definite and detailed form of the archetype grants much more scope for meaningful variations. Each account shows pronounced features both of repetition and of variation, as Alter discusses. The fact that all have the features of a ‘fall narrative’ type-scene serves as a means by which their readers can arrive at a sense of their theological meaning.

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<sup>97</sup> The list of fall narratives above is not intended to be comprehensive. Other possible candidates could be advanced. For instance, Terje Stordalen suggests the presence of fall narrative motifs in the story of Balaam (Stordalen 2000, 441-442). Another example could be Genesis 6, where following the multiplication of humankind on the earth, the sons of God see that the daughters of men are beautiful and take them for themselves, leading to the judgment of expulsion from the world in the flood. Yet another could be the account of David and Bathsheba in 2 Samuel 11, which follows shortly after the establishment of God’s covenant with David in 2 Samuel 7 (Leithart 2003b, 239).

<sup>98</sup> It could, for instance, be argued that the ‘fall narrative’ of Esau is an inversion of the theme, with the righteous Jacob playing the role of the serpent.

Each of these narratives plays a relatively crucial role within the broader narrative arcs within which they are located. Furthermore, each narrative plays, not upon a literary convention existing without the text, but upon a fundamental narrative of the biblical account. The fall narrative also relates to further literary patterns within the Old Testament. For instance, the serpent's deception of the woman recorded in the fall account is 'answered' by the divine poetic justice of a narrative pattern in which women deceive tyrants.<sup>99</sup>

Returning to the theme of time and typology, with which we begun this discussion, a distinction should be drawn between type-scenes founded upon a literary convention and typological developments of narrative such as that which I have been discussing above. The latter treats family resemblances between narratives as indications of theological relations, relations that operate through the medium of time. The former, by contrast, relates narratives in a more synchronic manner, through a literary kinship.

The fall narratives delineated above reveal a progressive and escalating unfolding and development of the themes introduced in Genesis 3, as in a rich symphony, the fall being recapitulated in the life of the patriarchs and Israel. The literary relationship that I have identified between Genesis 3 and Exodus 32 grounds, for instance, the theological analogy that some have seen between Sinai and Eden, as Israel recapitulated the sin of Adam—Adam is a type of Israel.<sup>100</sup>

While Alter's literary reading with which I introduced this discussion would seem to belong to a species of biblical interpretation for which concerns of historical referentiality are downplayed and the synchronic character of biblical literature emphasized over its historical development, it has facilitated the highlighting of three important points:

First, it has shown how, contrary to historicism, biblical typology is inseparably bound up in the narrative of Scripture. Louth observes that, when Daniélou distinguishes between typology (supposedly concerned with *events*) and allegory (supposedly concerned with *words*), he has fallen into the historicist trap: 'The 'types' of the Old Testament are not simply events, but the stories of the

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<sup>99</sup> Sarai deceives Pharaoh (Genesis 12:10-20) and Abimelech (Genesis 20); Rebekah deceives Abimelech (Genesis 26:6-11); Rachel deceives Laban (Genesis 31:33-35); the Hebrew midwives deceive Pharaoh (Exodus 1:15-22); Rahab deceives the men of Jericho (Joshua 2); Jael deceives Sisera (Judges 4:17-22; 5:24-27); Michal deceives Saul (1 Samuel 19:11-17); Esther deceives Haman.

<sup>100</sup> Wright 2002a, 563



events and the significance that is attributed to them in their narration.’<sup>101</sup> By working towards a rudimentary account of typology from the direction of biblical literature, rather than from the direction of historical event, I have illustrated the manner in which biblical typology develops out of the witness of the narrative itself, rather than being situated behind it, in some narratively unrendered history to which it bears witness. Important theological and typological correspondences, correspondences that would be opaque to the observer of the events ‘behind’ the text, are revealed through the literary craft of realistic narrative.<sup>102</sup>

Second, it helpfully illustrates the operation of typology within the Old Testament itself and places the ‘horizontality’ of typology in sharper relief. Characterizing typology in terms of two distinct planes and poles of Old Testament ‘type’ or ‘figure’ and New Testament ‘antitype’ or ‘reality’,<sup>103</sup> though successfully highlighting parallels between the realities described in both testaments, is not without its dangers. Relating type and reality by telescoping the passage of time and holding two events up against each other for comparison, while it may enable us to see similarities, risks occluding both the fact and the nature of a connection between them beyond their mutual resemblance. The typology present within the New Testament and within Christian readings of the Old Testament can be continuous with the Old Testament’s own typological intratextuality. While the Christ event occasions an escalation and climax of typology, it is not the inauguration of a completely alien mode of reading the Old Testament.<sup>104</sup> Furthermore, it underlines the shared *res* of Old and New Testament, so easily obscured in many framings of typology.

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<sup>101</sup> Louth 1989, 118

<sup>102</sup> The presence of such literary patterns can also serve as evidence for the presence of typological connections, strengthening their claim to be non-arbitrary.

<sup>103</sup> So, for instance, Daniélou 1956, 4: ‘That the realities of the Old Testament are figures of those of the New is one of the principles of biblical theology. This science of the similitudes between the two Testaments is called *typology*.’

<sup>104</sup> ‘Would Moses have been surprised by how John has understood the Passover lamb? Perhaps. But presumably he would have understood how John came up with such a typological view, since Moses himself likely had an understanding that some aspects of the very events in the lives of the patriarchs and of Israel had a foreshadowing character, pointing to later events. For example, would not Moses have perceived that Abraham’s entering into Egypt due to a famine, the pharaoh suffering plagues, and Abraham’s coming out of Egypt (Gen. 12:10-20) had such parallels with Israel’s later coming out of Egypt that the former was designed to point to the latter? In fact, in some cases of typology, which scholars have seen to be unique interpretations only from a New Testament retrospective viewpoint, there is evidence in the OT text itself that the OT writer had some degree of knowledge that the history he was narrating was pointing forward. In such cases, the NT writer is building on the already incipient typological view of the OT text itself and

Third, it suggests that, rather than understanding typology in terms of a one-to-one correlation between types and antitypes across the polarity between the testaments,<sup>105</sup> it might be better understood as a vast and developing matrix of scriptural figural relations, a matrix intrinsically related to and maturing into the form of Christ. Elements within this matrix will generally possess multiple relations. I will demonstrate something of the character of this matrix in the two chapters that follow this, as I discuss the progressive development of the typology of Exodus within the Old and New Testaments.

## ***7. Sacramental Typology***

Within my opening chapter, I explored the relationship between symbol and sacrament and emphasized the value of articulating a more temporal form of the symbol. In this discussion of biblical typology, I hope to have demonstrated something of the ‘sacramental’ character of the canonical text and its realistic narrative. The biblical narrative presents us with ‘figures’ that have an iconic character: like stained glass, these figures admit the light of a higher revelation. How this ‘sacramentality’ of the Christian Scriptures relates to the sacrament of baptism and how it serves to form the baptized subject is a central theme of this thesis and will be discussed in detail in coming chapters.

Recognizing the sacramental character of Scripture exercised through its figural character will allow us, even as we appreciate the historical origins and sense, to discover in continuity with that sense a word of illuminating witness to Christ and a direct divine address to us.<sup>106</sup> The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to an extended treatment of three related Synoptic passages, which together reveal how Christ emerges from the typology of the Old Testament witness.

## ***8. The Typology of Jesus’ Baptism and Wilderness Trials***

### **8.1 John the Baptist**

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developing it further in the light of progressive revelation of the Christ event.’ Beale 2011, 955-956.

<sup>105</sup> As suggested by Daniélou 1956, 4.

<sup>106</sup> Davis & Hays 2003, 77-78

The Synoptic accounts of the baptism and trials of Jesus in the wilderness helpfully showcase the power of typology. They illustrate how subtle differences in narrating a single set of events can establish, develop, and explore contrasting sets of typological relations.

John the Baptist's identity and relationship to Jesus are filled out using typological brushstrokes. Luke's gospel begins with the annunciation of John's birth to Zacharias, his father. Like the books of Exodus and Samuel, Luke begins his account with a story of birth. As in the book of Samuel, there is prayer at the temple (1 Samuel 1:8-18; Luke 1:9-13), a priest whose spiritual and physical perception fails (1 Samuel 1:12-14; 3:2; Luke 1:20), a barren woman (1 Samuel 1:5; Luke 1:7), and the dedication of a child as a Nazirite (1 Samuel 1:11; Luke 1:15).

The annunciation of John's birth and name follows a formula that can also be seen in the stories of Ishmael (Genesis 16:11-12), Isaac (Genesis 17:19-21), and Samson (Judges 13:3-5), who is also a Nazirite.<sup>107</sup> The description of his growth in Luke 1:80 is likewise typical,<sup>108</sup> taking the same form as the description of the growth of Ishmael (Genesis 21:20), Isaac (Genesis 21:8), Samson (Judges 13:24), and Samuel (1 Samuel 3:19).

As Raymond Brown observes, Luke's account of the annunciation of the births of John and Jesus echoes the story of Abram, Sarai, and Hagar in various respects.<sup>109</sup> There is an elderly and childless couple, the wife being barren, and a younger unmarried woman. The elderly husband responds with less than full faith in both cases. Ishmael and John alike grow up the wilderness (Genesis 21:20; Luke 1:80). The descriptions of Zacharias and Elizabeth in Luke 1:5 also recall the Levite parents of Moses and Aaron in Exodus 2:1-2, perhaps suggesting a connection between these two sons and Jesus and John.<sup>110</sup> Luke almost belabours their priestly pedigree. Zacharias is a priest of the division of Abijah, sharing the name of the great priestly martyr of 2 Chronicles 24:17-25. Elizabeth is 'of the daughters of Aaron' and shares the name of the matriarch of the Aaronic line, Elisheba (cf. Exodus 6:23).

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid. 155-159

<sup>108</sup> Taylor 1997, 43

<sup>109</sup> Brown 1993, 159n.74

<sup>110</sup> In both cases, it is the younger of the two who is the greater.

All three of the Synoptics relate John the Baptist to the wilderness (Matthew 3:1, 2; Mark 1:3-4; Luke 1:80; 3:2, 4). They also relate him to the great wilderness prophet, Elijah, both explicitly, as the fulfilment of the prophecy of Malachi 4:5-6 (Matthew 11:13-14; 17:10-13; Luke 1:17), and more subtly through the similarities of the descriptions of them in the text.<sup>111</sup> Perhaps most notably, John is described in a manner redolent of the description of Elijah in 2 Kings 1:8 (cf. Matthew 3:4; Mark 1:6). Like Elijah's persecution by Jezebel and Ahab, John the Baptist is persecuted, and eventually beheaded, by a ruler of the land at the instigation of his manipulative wife (Matthew 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29).

The site of John's baptizing had significant associations within Israel's history. N.T. Wright argues that John's baptizing was a re-enactment of the exodus and entrance into the land.<sup>112</sup> This baptism occurred in the wilderness on the far side of the Jordan. Those who came to be baptized by John had symbolically to leave the land and reenter it by washing. It was not only the place where Israel entered into the Promised Land under Joshua (Joshua 1:2-3), but was also the site of Elijah's ascension in 2 Kings 2.<sup>113</sup> The Jordan represented the seam between the ministries of Moses and Joshua and Elijah and Elisha, the point at which the baton was passed from the leader in the desert to his successor within the land.

## 8.2 Jesus' Baptism

In Matthew and Mark, Jesus is described as coming up out of the water, when the heavens were opened and the Spirit descended upon him in the form of a dove (Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10). The connection between the dove and the narrative of the flood is one with a long history.<sup>114</sup> In Genesis 8:8-12, the dove sent out by Noah descends upon the newly cleansed earth as it comes up out of the waters of the flood.<sup>115</sup> There is also a possible allusion to the Spirit's hovering over the original waters of the creation (Genesis 1:2).

The reference to Jesus' coming up from the water and the Spirit's coming upon him might also harken back to Isaiah 63:11-14, with its casting of the Exodus in terms of creation imagery. That, shortly after this, mention is made of

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<sup>111</sup> Taylor 1997, 281-288

<sup>112</sup> Wright 1996, 154-155, 160

<sup>113</sup> Taylor 1997, 214

<sup>114</sup> Just 2003, 67

<sup>115</sup> Keener 1999, 132-133

the rending of the heavens (64:1) would seem to give greater weight to the suggestion of the presence of such an allusion.

The declaration of the voice from heaven that immediately follows—‘this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’—might suggest a further set of allusions. In Song of Songs, the dove is associated with love, with the time of love (2:12), and with the eyes of both the lover (5:12) and his beloved (1:15; 4:1). ‘Dove’ is the lover’s ‘pet name’ for his beloved (1:15; 2:14; 4:1; 5:2; 6:9). Othmar Keel argues that the comparison between eyes (or, more strictly, ‘glances’) and doves in the Song of Songs is made on the basis of the understanding of doves as messengers of love, suggesting that this significance is also operative in the baptism accounts of the gospels.<sup>116</sup> Paul Griffiths also observes the connection between the dove and Israel (Jeremiah 48:28; Hosea 7:11; 11:11).<sup>117</sup> Coming as a dove, the Spirit is the ‘bodily form’ of the Father’s love for his Son. The Spirit is the personal gift of the Father’s love and the relationship between Son and Spirit may have nuptial overtones.

The Pentecostal descent of the Spirit has often been related to the dove at Jesus’ baptism, not least in the representation of the Spirit as a fiery dove in Christian iconography.<sup>118</sup> The connection of the Spirit with the Bride (Revelation 22:17), who descends from the opened heavens at the end of the book of Revelation, may also involve a related network of imagery (Revelation 21:2, 9-10).

The declaration of Jesus’ beloved sonship in the voice from heaven echoes the Old Testament and evokes Davidic themes (e.g. 2 Samuel 7:14; Psalm 2:7).<sup>119</sup> Both Matthew (1:1, 6, 17, 20) and Luke (1:27, 32, 69; 2:4, 11) have already associated Jesus with David. In 1 Samuel, David—whose name means ‘beloved’—is presented as a beautiful man (16:12, 18), a man loved by God (1 Samuel 13:14), who steals the hearts of the people from Saul (18:6-8), the hearts of Saul’s servants (18:22), the heart of Saul’s daughter (18:28), and the heart of Saul’s heir (20:17). David is also the lover, the man of passion, the musician, and the composer of the psalms.

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<sup>116</sup> Keel 1994, 69-71

<sup>117</sup> Griffiths 2011, 44

<sup>118</sup> For a fascinating and provocative discussion of Christian iconography in this regard, see Coakley 2013, 190-265 *passim*.

<sup>119</sup> Green 1997, 186

The associations already established between John the Baptist and Samuel in the gospel of Luke would also invite reflection upon a typological link between the baptism of Jesus by John and the anointing of David by Samuel in 1 Samuel 16:12-13. At the point of David's anointing the Spirit comes upon him and he is sent to minister to Saul, who is plagued with a distressing spirit from YHWH (1 Samuel 16:14-23). In the chapter that immediately follows, Goliath stands against Israel for forty days (1 Samuel 17:16) until he is defeated by David. David became king at the age of thirty, reigning for forty years (2 Samuel 5:4): Jesus was baptized and entered his public ministry at thirty years of age (Luke 3:23).

Luke's account diverges from that of the other gospels by inserting a genealogy between the baptism of Jesus and his trials in the wilderness. Peter Leithart offers a detailed case for the claim that Luke was presenting Jesus' baptism as an initiation into priestly ministry.<sup>120</sup> Like Jesus, the priests entered their ministry at the age of thirty (Numbers 4:3), through a baptism and anointing (Exodus 40:12-13). Leithart suggests that the genealogy is placed at this point to provide Jesus' priestly credentials.<sup>121</sup> The term 'Son of God' is both priestly and royal. The effort to which Luke has gone to establish the priestly pedigree of John himself might also be relevant here.<sup>122</sup>

### 8.2.1 *Matthew's Account*

The trials of Jesus in the wilderness are recorded in each of the Synoptic gospels, following the account of Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist. Matthew and Luke's accounts are more extended, while Mark's is truncated. Each of the three accounts is prefaced by a statement of the Spirit's agency in bringing Jesus into the wilderness. The differences between these are illuminating: each triggers a different set of associations and casts the events within the wilderness in a different manner.

Matthew speaks of Jesus being 'led up into the wilderness by the Spirit' (4:1—ἀνέχθη εἰς τὴν ἔρημον ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος). This recalls the language of

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<sup>120</sup> Leithart 2003a, 111-120

<sup>121</sup> Ibid. 117-118. Leithart points to the number of names with priestly connotations in the genealogy in support of this theory: Eli, Levi, Melchi, Matthatias.

<sup>122</sup> Further evidence to support a priestly connection might be found in John's reference to Jesus' 'purging of the threshing floor,' in an allusion to the purifying of temple worship in Malachi 3:1-3. The threshing floor was the site of the temple (2 Chronicles 3:1).

the Exodus from Egypt (Exodus 13:18; Psalm 106:9; Jeremiah 2:6; Amos 2:10). The immediate set of connections that this appears to invite is those of the forty years of Israel's testing in the wilderness. The fact that each of Jesus' responses to the temptations reference the book of Deuteronomy (6:13, 16; 8:3; 10:20) and all refer to the testing of Israel in the wilderness would appear to strengthen this (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:1-13).

Deuteronomy 8:2-3 refers to the provision of manna—bread from heaven—before the statement that Jesus quotes in response to the tempter's challenge to make bread from stones. A contrast between bread from the earth (perhaps related to the food of Egypt) and the bread from heaven given at the word of YHWH might be implied here.

The temptation to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple in the 'holy city' would seem to be a reference to exiling himself from God's special presence.<sup>123</sup> The devil assures him that God will protect Jesus if he takes such action. Exodus 32 provides background for this temptation, as, while he is on the 'pinnacle' of Sinai, YHWH offers Moses the option of allowing YHWH to destroy the Israelites and forming a nation out of him instead (Exodus 32:9-10). If Moses goes alone, he can be assured that YHWH will protect him. However, Moses later offers to be blotted out of YHWH's book for the sake of the nation (32:32-33). The temptation that Jesus faces is similar in character: in casting himself down he might be protected, but the people would perish.<sup>124</sup>

In the final temptation in Matthew's account, Jesus is taken up a high mountain, shown all of the kingdoms of the world, and offered the chance to rule over them if he will just bow to the devil. In Jesus' response to the temptation he alludes to Deuteronomy 6, with the connection that it draws between the promise of inheriting the land and the serving of YHWH. In Deuteronomy 32:48-52; 34:1-4, YHWH takes Moses up to the high mountain of Nebo and allows him to see the kingdom of the land. However, Moses must die without entering. Jesus faces the temptation of entering into the kingdom apart from death.

### 8.2.2 *Mark's Account*

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<sup>123</sup> Jordan 2006b

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

The introduction to Mark's account of Jesus' wilderness trials involves a different set of echoes. Mark writes, 'the Spirit drove him out into the wilderness' (1:12—τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτὸν ἐκβάλλει εἰς τὴν ἔρημον). This is reminiscent of David being driven out from Saul's court into the wildernesses (1 Samuel 23:14-15, 24-25; 24:1; 25:1; 26:2-3). While in the wildernesses, David lived with the wild beasts (the Gentiles—1 Samuel 21:10-15; 22:3-5; 27:1-4; 30:1-20), and resisted the temptation to snatch the kingdom for himself before it was time.

ἐκβάλλω is typically the verb used to describe exorcisms (Mark 1:34, 39, 43; 3:15, 22-23; 6:13; 7:26; 9:18, 28, 38), so its use in this context might be unexpected. The wilderness was the realm of wild beasts and demons, the place where unclean spirits went when they were cast out (e.g. Luke 11:24). While the language of Matthew 4:1, with its allusion to the Exodus, characterizes the wilderness as a site of testing pilgrimage, Mark's introductory statement would seem to characterize it more as a site of exclusion and exile.

The Spirit's driving Jesus out into the wilderness might suggest a different typological backdrop for Mark's account, a backdrop that also can be seen at points in Luke's account. The Day of Atonement or Day of Coverings ritual (Leviticus 16) involved a goat being sacrificed as a sin offering for the congregation of Israel (v.15) and another goat being sent away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable person (vv.20-22). A lot was cast between the two of them to determine which would do which: one was for YHWH and the other for Azazel. One of the goats—the goat for YHWH—was killed for the nation as a sin offering (along with a bull for the High Priest) and its blood was used to sprinkle on and before the mercy seat and the golden altar of incense, releasing them from their defilement and removing any judgment resting upon the world order that they symbolized. The High Priest confessed the iniquities of the nation over the other goat—the goat for Azazel—and sent it off into the wilderness by the hands of a suitable person. This goat, to prevent its return, would typically be thrown over a precipice. After this had been done, the fat of the goat and bull of the sin offering for the people and the High Priest would be burnt on the altar. Then the flesh of the sin offering, its skin, and offal would be burnt in a clean place outside of the camp and no one would eat any of it. Through the Day of Atonement, the



land would be cleansed and the nation would be released from their sins as they were confessed over the scapegoat.

The scapegoat is literally described as being ‘for Azazel’, a word that only occurs four times in the whole Bible, all within Leviticus 16 (vv.8, 10, 26). Various suggestions have been given for the meaning of this. The name ‘Azazel’ appears as the name of a chief demon condemned to the wilderness in the book of Enoch (Enoch 8:1; 9:6; 10:4-8; 13:1-2; 54:5; 55:4; 69:2). Demons are associated with goats (Leviticus 17:7; Isaiah 13:21; 34:13-14; 2 Chronicles 11:15) and with the wilderness (Luke 11:24; Revelation 18:2) at various points in canonical texts.

As a symbolic and sacrificial animal, the goat is related to the ruler of the people (Leviticus 4:22-24) and presumably also to the congregation as a whole as a civic polity. The common symbolic root that accounts for this meaning and also for the demonic connotations of the goat is that of governmental authority and power. The word *`attuwd*, for instance, means both he-goat and leader (cf. Isaiah 14:9; Zechariah 10:3; Daniel 8:5, 8, 21). A word for ram, *'ayil*, has a similar double meaning.

The Day of Atonement ritual is subtly alluded to in various Old Testament narratives, the two goats often representing two brothers.<sup>125</sup> David is expelled from Saul’s court and spends time in the wilderness. My suggestion is that David is playing the part of the goat for Azazel, fulfilling the destiny of Judah. David is associated with goats at various points of the story. He is first found among the flocks (1 Samuel 16:11). He is described as ‘ruddy’, language that is only elsewhere used of Esau (1 Samuel 16:12; cf. Genesis 25:25).<sup>126</sup> He is sent to Saul with a kid (1 Samuel 16:20). Michal, David’s wife, uses goats’ hair as a means to create an image of David to abet his escape (19:13). Saul later seeks for David in the Rocks of the Wild Goats (24:2).

If I am correct in seeing Day of Atonement allusions in the story of David, I believe that they present the nation as being under condemnation on account of

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<sup>125</sup> Ishmael is sent into the wilderness by the hand of Hagar in Genesis 21, while Isaac becomes a quasi-sacrifice in the chapter that follows. Rebekah and Jacob play a clever quasi-sacrificial deception upon Isaac in Genesis 27, involving two goats (verse 9). Joseph and Judah are associated with two goats in 37:31-33 and 38:17-23, one whose blood is displayed to the father and another who is sent away by the hand of a suitable man.

<sup>126</sup> Esau is a ‘hairy’ (*sa`iyr*) man, hair that is connected with the goat skin that is used to ‘cover’ up Jacob so that he can receive the blessing (27:11). The word *sa`iyr* also means he-goat, both the goat used for sacrifice and the demonic ‘goats’. Esau’s land was Seir (*Se`iyr*—Genesis 32:3).

the actions of Saul. David takes the identity of the nation upon himself as the anointed one and bears it into the wilderness. He faces off with the demonically-driven Saul and with the wild beasts of the Gentile rulers. He dwells in caves and wildernesses, places of death and demon possession. While doing this, he resists the various temptations he faces to grab the kingdom by force before it is given to him. By submitting himself to expulsion from the land, David bears the judgment lying upon the kingdom, so that one day he can bring it blessing.

John baptized with a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Confession of sins was an essential part of John's baptism (Matthew 3:6; Mark 1:5), as it was on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:21). Within this suggested typology, John the Baptist plays a role analogous to that of the High Priest. Jesus is the kid of the goats for Azazel who bears away the sin of the people. In being baptized by the hands of the priest, Jesus takes upon himself the judgment lying over the confessing multitudes.

Being 'driven out' into the wilderness by the Spirit, Jesus was being treated like a demon, being exorcised into their realm (cf. Luke 11:24), and sent to Azazel, the prince of the demons. He was being expelled as the exiled scapegoat for the sins that the multitudes were confessing. The encounter with the devil can be understood in light of this, as perhaps can the references to being cast down from high precipices (cf. Luke 4:29). It is on the basis of this bearing of the sins of the nation into the wilderness that Jesus proclaims delivery to the captives upon his return.<sup>127</sup>

### 8.2.3 *Luke's Account*

Various features of the Lukan account are especially noteworthy. While Matthew's genealogy starts with Abraham, Luke's traces Jesus' line back to Adam and God. While Abraham represents Israel, Adam represents the entire human race. The fact that Jesus is the Son of God is underlined in these earlier chapters of Luke (1:35; 2:49; 3:22, 38; 4:3). Jesus has been connected with Adam in the verse immediately before the temptation account. He is then described as

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<sup>127</sup> Elsewhere, Jesus is associated with the goat of the sin offering, his blood cleansing the world and the judgment it pronounces against humanity, and opening the way into communion with heaven. His body is offered outside of the camp (Hebrews 13:10-13). I suspect that there the notion of such a 'two stage' atonement might be worth exploring.

being filled with the Spirit (the breath) of God. Like Adam, he is tempted by the devil to eat forbidden food and to preempt God's kingdom plans. Like the serpent in the Garden, the devil seeks to twist God's word. Jesus is here an Adamic figure resisting temptation in the hunger of the wilderness.

Luke begins his description of the wilderness trials as follows: 'Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit ... was brought in the Spirit into the wilderness' (4:1—Ἰησοῦς δὲ πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου ... ἤγετο ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ). This is the language of the prophet caught up and transported by the Spirit (cf. Ezekiel 3:14). The similarities with Luke 2:27, where Simeon comes by the Spirit into the temple, should also be observed. Another interesting parallel can be seen in Revelation 17:3, where the seer John is carried away in the Spirit into the wilderness, where he encounters the Whore of Babylon upon the Beast.

The prophetic cast of Luke's account is worthy of our attention. Alone among the evangelists, Luke introduces John the Baptist with a pronounced prophetic formula: 'In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea ... the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.' Most of the books of the prophets are introduced with a similar formula: the prophet is situated in the context of the reign of some ruler(s), the name of the prophet and his father is given, and we are told that the word of YHWH came to him (cf. Hosea 1:1; Amos 1:1; Micah 1:1, Zephaniah 1:1, Haggai 1:1; Zechariah 1:1). Luke places John the Baptist—the son of two people who prophesy (Luke 1:41-45, 67-79)—within the same prophetic mould.

A unique feature of Luke's account of Jesus' baptism is the fact that the Spirit is said to descend while Jesus was praying. Charles Talbert writes, 'The Third Evangelist has turned the narrative of Jesus' baptism into an episode of prayer in which there are [*sic.*] an accompanying vision and audition. This is typically Lukan.'<sup>128</sup> Luke's particular emphasis upon prayer can also be seen in the fact that he alone refers to Jesus being in prayer at the moment of his transfiguration (9:29). Key moments of God's work occur in response to efficacious prayer in Luke and Acts (e.g. Acts 1:14; 9:11; 10:2-4, 9-16). This accent within the Lukan account highlights the power of the prophet as a man of prayer, who can prevail with God.

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<sup>128</sup> Talbert 2003, 68

Similar themes occur in the story of Elijah. During the drought the Spirit leads Elijah out of the land, where he miraculously ‘makes bread’ from pottery (1 Kings 17:8-16). Later Elijah is fed with miraculous bread baked on ‘hot stones’ (19:5-8), which gives him strength to go without food for forty days and nights. Both of these events are accompanied by the word of YHWH. He then goes to the mountain of Sinai, where he is given a vision and commission for the future of the kingdom. The ministry of Elijah and Elisha is paradigmatic for Jesus, as his sermon in Nazareth implies (Luke 4:24-27).<sup>129</sup>

#### 8.2.4 *Ezekiel and Luke’s Jesus*

My argument for the significance of prophetic allusions in Luke’s account can be strengthened by the connections between Jesus and Ezekiel. The parallels between Jesus and Ezekiel are significant and manifold. Ezekiel enters into priesthood at about thirty years of age (Ezekiel 1:1).<sup>130</sup> He sees the heavens opened and visions of God (1:1). He hears a voice of one speaking (1:28). He is addressed as ‘Son of man’ (2:1) and the Spirit comes upon him (2:2).<sup>131</sup> He is then fed by the word of God (3:1-3) and brought on a visionary journey (3:14, etc.).

Read against the backdrop of the book of Ezekiel, further possible relations open up. Perhaps in the reference to the Spirit taking Christ into the wilderness there is a subtle allusion to the hand of the Lord coming upon Ezekiel and carrying him in the Spirit into the wilderness valley of dry bones (Ezekiel 37:1). Ezekiel is first transported by the Spirit into the wilderness (37:1), then to a very high mountain (40:2), then to various extremities of the temple (40:17, 24, 28, 32, 41:1; 42:1; 43:1; 44:1, 4). This visionary journey is mirrored in Revelation: wilderness (17:3), mountain (21:10), temple (21:22ff.), the mountain and the temple being closely related, as in Ezekiel. The order of the temptations in Luke differs from that in Matthew: I submit that the explanation for this

<sup>129</sup> The healing of the centurion’s son (7:1-10)—a miracle done at a distance for a military man of a foreign power—can be related to Elisha’s healing of Naaman the Syrian, another foreign military man, which Jesus mentioned in verse 27 (cf. 2 Kings 5:1-19). The raising of the dead son of the widow of Nain (7:11-17) relates to Elijah’s raising of the widow of Zarephath’s son (1 Kings 17:17-24). The widow of Zarephath is mentioned in verse 26.

<sup>130</sup> Darr 2001, 1110-1111 maintains that the thirtieth year in Ezekiel 1:1 would have been related to Ezekiel’s entry into priesthood at the age of thirty by ancient readers.

<sup>131</sup> Green 1997, 185

discrepancy is to be found in the evangelists' intentions to pursue different sets of typological connections. Read against the type of Ezekiel, the devil gives Jesus a false prophetic 'apocalypse,' a twisted alternative to the visions of God's future received by the prophets.

In 2:9, Ezekiel is handed the scroll of prophecy, the word of God, which he then eats in 3:1-3, as does John in Revelation 10:8-11. The prophet receives the word of God into his mouth, which he will then speak forth. In Luke 4:17, Jesus is handed the scroll of prophecy. He then proceeds to speak the word of prophecy as a word that he incarnates. The people marvel at the 'gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.'<sup>132</sup> In this expression, Luke alludes to the concluding words of Deuteronomy 8:3, which Jesus did not quote in Luke 4:4 (cf. Matthew 4:4). This suggests that Jesus' response to the first trial by the devil should be related to the prophets' ingestion of the prophetic word.

#### 8.2.5 *Danielic Themes*

Luke's gospel is unique in mentioning the angel Gabriel (1:19, 26). References to Gabriel recall the prophecy of Daniel, Gabriel being mentioned in Daniel 8:15-27, 9:20-27, and probably also in the vision of chapter 10. In Daniel the archangel Michael is spoken of as the angel of Israel, one who will stand up at some point in the future (10:21; 12:1). There Gabriel is spoken of as a mighty warrior angel, struggling with the angels over other nations behind the scenes. While the archangel Michael's ministry seems to be focused upon Israel in particular, Gabriel operates within a wider world of empires.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> The three trials seem to be recapitulated within 4:16-30. After Jesus has been 'fed' by the scroll of the word of God and bears those words on his mouth, the people of Nazareth point out that Jesus is Joseph's son. With this they attempt to exert some authoritative claim upon Jesus, believing that Jesus owes them special treatment—'Physician, heal yourself!' He should recognize the greater duty that he has towards his own country, literally his 'fatherland' (v.23). Jesus challenges this claim with the examples of Elijah and Elisha. The attempt to throw Jesus over the brow of the hill in verse 29 should be related with the third temptation. Jesus' own people seek to 'cast him down from the Temple', but he does not allow Israel to cast him away, which would have been the easy way out of the situation. This leaves us with the question of whether the second temptation is alluded to between these two. I believe that it is. Specifically, Jesus rejects the attempts of his own people to get him to serve them, serving God alone. Rather than seeking demonic mastery over the world, he chooses to minister deliverance to Gentiles, as Elijah and Elisha did.

<sup>133</sup> Seeing all of the kingdoms in a moment in time might be like the visions in Daniel of the different successive empires.

This theme of angelic conflict provides a backdrop for the Lukan account of Jesus' trials in the wilderness. The references to a known angelic ruler, the heavenly army (2:13), and conflict with the devil in these early chapters of Luke serve to foreground the reality of a battle of spiritual powers, something which is also articulated in Jesus' statements concerning Satan's plummet from heaven (10:18) and the plundering of the strong man (11:14-23).

Jesus is described as 'mightier' than John, presented in the terms of a powerful warrior. The angelic conflict motifs drawn from Daniel provide us with a natural sense for such language. Daniel's prophetic account of the role of Michael—the heavenly prince of Israel—in supporting Gabriel against the opposing kings in Daniel 10:13, 21, when read in concert with the prophecy of Malachi 3:1, reveals a greater significance to the background of Daniel:

“Behold, I send My messenger,  
And he will prepare the way before Me.  
And the Lord, whom you seek,  
Will suddenly come to His temple,  
Even the Messenger of the covenant,  
In whom you delight.  
Behold, He is coming,”  
Says the Lord of hosts.

An association between Michael, the angelic prince of Israel, and the Angel of YHWH/Messenger of the Covenant is a natural one, and is an identification that appears to have been made in other New Testament texts (Jude 9; cf. Zechariah 3). In the prophecy of Malachi, employed in Luke in association with John the Baptist's ministry as a forerunner (7:27), Jesus would seem to be in position of the Messenger of the Covenant and, by implication, to be Michael. In light of such allusions to Daniel's angelic conflict, the struggle with the devil in the wilderness takes on added significance.

At the end of the trials in Luke, the devil departs from Jesus 'until an opportune time,' presumably Gethsemane. Observe the emphasis upon trial (a more appropriate word than 'temptation') in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke

22:39-46—πειρασμός is used as in 4:13). Perhaps this should be related to the ‘time of trouble’ spoken of in Daniel 12:1.<sup>134</sup>

### ***9. Conclusion***

The three accounts of Jesus’ baptism and wilderness trials in the Synoptic gospels offer us contrasting typological frameworks within which to understand the events they record. While a number of the allusions suggested above are uncertain or speculative, I hope that it should be apparent that in seeking such allusions, even when faint, we are answering invitations furnished by the texts themselves. The gospels’ presentation of a single set of events within such differing typological frameworks also serves to support the claim of this chapter that typology should be sought at the level of the text’s narration, rather than just ‘behind’ it, in a putative correspondence between ‘events’.

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<sup>134</sup> Perhaps a relationship between the trials in the wilderness and the trials associated with Jesus’ death should be drawn. Here is one suggestion. The first trial is in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus must live by every word of the Father. The Father’s word takes the form of a ‘cup’ that he must drink (22:42). While Jesus could reject the cup of his Father and eat the portion of the devil, he chooses to live by the word of his Father. The second trial relates to his claims of kingship while before Pilate and Herod (22:6—23:12). The kingdoms of this world cast their judgment on Christ, ridiculing and condemning him. Jesus could assert his reign in a demonic fashion, but he accepts the crown of thorns and is raised up on the cross. The third and final trial occurs while Jesus is on the cross. Those watching the crucifixion, the rulers among them, the soldiers, and even one of the criminals crucified with him call him to save himself (23:35-39), to cast himself down from the cross and to abandon the temple and his mission. As Jesus perseveres with his mission through this trial, the veil of the temple is torn in two (23:45) and the ‘strong man’ is decisively defeated.

# 3

## IN THE CLOUD AND IN THE SEA

### Exodus in the New Testament

#### *1. Passover and Supper*

The Exodus from Egypt functions as a fundamental paradigm within which Christ and the salvation he brings are presented and understood within the New Testament. The architectonic significance of the Exodus narrative for the New Testament authors is perhaps most notably seen in the connection that all of the gospels records draw between the death of Jesus and the events of the Passover. While Luke may be alone in referring to the events of Holy Week as Jesus' 'exodus' (ἐξοδος—Luke 9:31), the Passover connection is prominent in each of four gospel accounts.

It is arguably in the culminating and encapsulating symbols of the work of Christ—the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist—that the importance of this Exodus background is most readily apparent. More particular attention to the sacrament of baptism must wait until the chapter following this one. However, the Last Supper, and the institution of the sacrament of the Eucharist within its context, is explicitly cast in terms of the Passover. N.T. Wright writes:

[T]here should be no doubt but that Jesus intended to say, with all the power of symbolic drama and narrative, that he was shortly to die, and that his death was to be seen within the context of the larger story of YHWH's redemption of Israel. More specifically, he intended to say that



his death was to be seen as the central and climactic moment towards which that story had been moving, and for which the events of the exodus were the crucial and determining backdrop; and that those who shared the meal, not only then but subsequently, were the people of the renewed covenant, the people who received ‘the forgiveness of sins’, that is, the end of exile.<sup>1</sup>

Just as the original Passover meal brought together the saving event with the institution of a memorial, so Jesus’ institution of the Eucharist serves as a memorial of the saving event of his death. That Jesus institutes his memorial within the context of a Passover or Passover-like meal serves both to root his salvation within, and frame it by, the events and pattern of the Exodus. By operating within the context of the Passover meal, Jesus can take up and transform existing symbols, simultaneously framing elements both of continuity and of surprising development.<sup>2</sup> Wright advances the possibility that Jesus’ action would have been a transformation of actions typically performed by the host of a Passover meal:

[T]here is every reason to suppose that the host at a Passover meal, then as now, would retell the story of the exodus, interpreting the actions and the elements of the meal in terms of that story, thereby linking the present company with the children of Israel as they left Egypt. The words of Jesus at the supper would therefore have been seen, not only with later hindsight, but at the time, as performing a similar function. They would have been understood as reinterpreting the meal in relation to himself, claiming that the kingdom-events about to occur were the climax of the long history which looked back to the exodus from Egypt as its formative moment.<sup>3</sup>

As Wright recognizes, Jesus’ reinterpretation of an existing meal—notably one of fundamental importance for Israel’s identity—ensures a lively commerce of meaning between the Exodus narrative and that of Christ’s actions. By employing the existing Passover meal, the paradigmatic significance of the ‘formative moment’ of the Exodus is reaffirmed and the deliverance of Christ is framed in terms of and in continuity with it. However, as in the prophetic tradition of a

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<sup>1</sup> Wright 1996, 562-563

<sup>2</sup> Wainwright 1971, 22-23: ‘According to the synoptic presentations the eucharist was instituted during the course of a Passover meal, and the Lucan account in particular ... seems to suggest that the eucharist was intended to supersede the passover. We may therefore expect the eucharist to take over, and possibly to modify, certain theological themes connected with the Jewish passover.’

<sup>3</sup> Wright 1996, 559

‘second exodus,’ the originary event is recast as an anticipatory deliverance, to be surpassed by the eschatological deliverance that it prophetically foreshadows and which its memorial both invokes and awaits. Geoffrey Wainwright draws attention to the eschatological and messianic expectation associated with the Passover, arguing that within the church the ‘messianic eschatological expectation’ of Israel was ‘transposed to the *return* of Christ.’<sup>4</sup>

## ***2. Exodus Themes in the Gospels***

The importance of the Exodus for the evangelists can be witnessed in the ways that its pattern provides an ordering principle for their accounts, both when it comes to larger bodies of texts and particular pericopes. An example of the former can be seen in the book of Matthew. Dale Allison draws to our attention the fact that ‘the series of events in Matthew 1-7 recapitulates the story of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt,’<sup>5</sup> a series of events that is patterned as follows:

1. Israel’s deliverer is born.
2. A wicked king sits upon the throne.
3. That king slaughters Jewish infants.
4. The hero’s years after infancy go unrecounted.
5. He passes through the waters.
6. He goes into the desert.
7. He stays there for a period of time marked by forty units.
8. Temptation comes in the form of hunger and idolatry.
9. The deliverer goes up on a mountain.
10. We learn the commandments.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to this overarching structure, the text of Matthew also registers the importance of the Mosaic typology in other ways. In the conclusion of the previous chapter, I remarked upon the way that Matthew, by means of the statement introducing the wilderness temptations, for instance, subtly frames Jesus’ actions in terms of Exodus typology. Another instance of a more explicit reference to the Exodus is found in Matthew’s account of the flight into Egypt (Matthew 2:13-15), which also underlines the Israel and Moses typology. Like the

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<sup>4</sup> Wainwright 1971, 23

<sup>5</sup> Allison 2006, 110

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. See also Allison 1993, 268 and Leithart 2007b, 9-11 as a helpful modification of some points of Allison’s thesis.

Israelites under the leadership of Moses and as a fulfilment of the prophetic description of the nation in Hosea 11:1—ἐξ Αἰγύπτου ἐκάλεσα τὸν υἱόν μου—Jesus comes out of Egypt and enters into Israel.

John 1:14-18 offers further evidence of the importance of the Exodus background for the gospel writers. In a richly evocative statement, within which John encapsulates the fundamental import of his gospel, a number of Exodus themes are alluded to. It is Exodus 33-34 in particular that stands behind John's text.<sup>7</sup> The use of the verb σκηνώω in verse 14a is noteworthy for its tabernacle allusion: the presence of the incarnate Logos is implicitly compared to the presence of God in the midst of his people in the tabernacle at Sinai.<sup>8</sup> The fundamental imagery in terms of which John frames the incarnation is drawn from the Exodus.

The beholding of the glory of God (v.14b), coupled with the reference to the fact that no one has seen God at any time (v.18a, cf. Exodus 33:20), also suggest an allusion back to the events of Exodus 33 and 34, where God passed before Moses and showed him his glory. The Logos made flesh is described as being 'full of grace and truth'—πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας—a rough approximation to Exodus 34:6, where God describes himself as 'abounding in goodness and truth'—καὶ πολυέλεος καὶ ἀληθινός (LXX). Such an implied parallel relates Christ to God's revelation of his glory to Moses at Sinai and perhaps by extension to the Angel of the Presence and Glory-Spirit theophanies.<sup>9</sup> This detail would fill out John's understanding of Christ's glorious pre-existence and prior activity in the history of Israel (cf. John 8:58; 12:41; 17:5), a topic to which we will return later in this chapter.

Having established an analogy between the recipients of the God's self-revelation in Christ and Moses,<sup>10</sup> in verse 17, John presents Jesus as one who

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<sup>7</sup> Evans 1993, 79-82

<sup>8</sup> Keener highlights the possibility that the LXX translators favoured this Greek term 'because its consonants correspond to the Hebrew consonants for the Shekinah, God's presence' (Keener 2003, 1:408). John the Baptist's description of the Spirit descending and remaining—τὸ πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον καὶ μένον—on Christ in 1:33 might also recall the description of the Shekinah in Exodus 33:9—κατέβαινε ὁ σὺλος τῆς νεφέλης καὶ ἵστατο—and 34:5—καὶ κατέβη κύριος ἐν νεφέλῃ καὶ παρέστη.

<sup>9</sup> Meredith Kline argues that the Angel of the Presence and the Glory-Spirit are two distinct yet related theophanic manifestations. While the Angel of the Presence appeared in a less glorious form on several occasions in the Old Testament, he could also appear in union with the Glory-Spirit, in a significantly more dramatic revelation (Kline 1999, 70ff.).

<sup>10</sup> Keener 2003, 1:412

exceeds the revelation of the Torah. Later in the gospel, Jesus claims that Moses testified concerning him (5:45-47). By repeating his reference to ‘grace and truth,’ John may be establishing a contrast between revelation through the intermediation of Moses and the Torah and the more direct experience of theophanic revelation of Moses at Sinai.<sup>11</sup> Those who encounter Jesus Christ are having an experience parallel to the theophany witnessed by Moses on Sinai, surpassing the Torah, which serves as an intermediating revelation for a people who cannot have this direct encounter.

Scattered Exodus allusions occur through the rest of the early chapters of John’s gospel. Jesus is the ‘Lamb of God’ (1:29), which I believe is properly related to, among other things, the Paschal Lamb, a case strengthened by references to the Paschal Lamb in connection with Jesus’ death later in the gospel (18:28; 19:36).<sup>12</sup> New exodus themes are also prominent in the context in the ministry of John the Baptist (1:23), who is preparing the way for the coming deliverance foretold by the prophets.<sup>13</sup> Jesus’ first sign involves turning water to wine, possibly playing off the background of and inverting the first plague upon Egypt, the turning of the water to blood (2:1-12; cf. Exodus 7:14-25). In 3:14, Jesus compares himself to the serpent that Moses lifted up in the wilderness.<sup>14</sup> In

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<sup>11</sup> The intermediation involved in the giving of the Torah to Moses is a theme elsewhere within the New Testament (Acts 7:38; Galatians 3:19). 2 Corinthians 3:7—4:6 is an extended Pauline reflection on this theme, aligning new covenant Christians with the direct theophanic encounter experienced by Moses at Sinai, while contrasting them with those who only know the veiled revelation given through his intermediation (Hays 1989, 137).

<sup>12</sup> Keener 2003, 1:454. The Apostle Paul also relates Christ to the Passover Lamb in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8.

<sup>13</sup> Rikki Watts provides a far-ranging treatment of the background and significance of this reference as it occurs within the gospel of Mark (Watts 2000, 53ff.). While I will not be addressing the book of Mark here, Watts’ work provides ample evidence that the Exodus is also paradigmatic for its narrative.

<sup>14</sup> In the LXX of the account of Numbers 21:4-9, the serpent is stood upon a ‘sign’ (σημεῖον—or standard). For John, Jesus’ cross plays a similar role. Jesus is raised up as a ‘sign’ (σημεῖον) and, as people look to him (in faith), they will be healed (cf. John 19:37; Zechariah 12:10). Throughout John’s gospel, the cross is presented as a ‘lifting up’ of Jesus, a sort of *ascension* event (cf. 8:28; 12:32-34). In fact, Jesus’ ministry and death is a progressive movement upward: up to Jerusalem, up to the cross, up from the grave, up to heaven. Beyond the comparison between Jesus and the bronze serpent, there is an implicit reiteration of the relationship between Moses and Jesus here. Moses, who bore witness to Christ’s glory, also typologically raised him as a symbol to the people. The mention of the wilderness might also be significant. The wilderness was the staging ground for the new exodus, as in John the Baptist’s description of himself as a voice crying in the wilderness (1:23). It will be within this wilderness that Jesus will be raised up for the people. The Isaianic references to God’s raising a standard as part of the new exodus may be a dimension of the background here (Isaiah 49:22; 59:19; 62:10).

6:14 and 7:40 people assert that Jesus is the prophet like Moses of Deuteronomy 18:15-19.

Many examples of the use of the Exodus as a pattern or background within smaller pericopes could be given: here I will give just two. The man with the infirmity in John 5 had suffered from it for thirty-eight years, a number of rather surprising specificity (cf. John 21:11), offering an intriguing possible allusion to Deuteronomy 2:14, where it denotes the period of time that Israel wandered after their refusal to enter into the Promised Land.<sup>15</sup> The lameness of the man may well have entailed some degree of exclusion from the precincts of the Temple (cf. 2 Samuel 5:8; Acts 3:1-10).

Given the possible exodus allusion in the “thirty-eight years” (5:5), the “troubling of the waters” (John 5:7) might suggest an allusion to the exodus; the same language appears in Ps 77:16 (76:17 LXX), which depicts the time when God led his people “like a flock” by Moses and Aaron (ὥς πρόβατα, 77:20 [76:21 LXX]; cf. John 5:2), and that entire Psalm assures its hearers that the God who acted in the past exodus would act again (Ps 77:8-15).<sup>16</sup>

The lame man, a damaged member of the ‘flock’ experienced exclusion for thirty-eight years, awaiting the promise of entry through the troubling of the waters. He is brought into rest and entry on the Sabbath (picking up his bed and later entering into the temple) by Jesus, who, in keeping with his name, plays the role of Joshua.

The following chapter of John provides further instances of Exodus symbolism. Chapter 5 concludes with Jesus’ words concerning the testimony of Moses. The figure of Moses is present in the background of John’s narrative at a number of points, not least in the speculation that Jesus is the Prophet like Moses (6:14).<sup>17</sup> Chapter 6 opens with the sketch of an Exodus pattern: Jesus crosses over

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<sup>15</sup> Meyers & Jordan 2000

<sup>16</sup> Keener 2003, 1:638

<sup>17</sup> There is a wealth of pastoral imagery throughout John’s gospel, which provides another connection with the theme of Exodus, as Laniak 2006, 207ff. argues. As already observed, Moses was the great shepherd of Israel (e.g. Psalm 77:20; Isaiah 63:11-12), delivering Israel with his rod. In casting himself as the good shepherd in chapter 10, the one who calls his sheep and leads them out (ἐξάγει αὐτά—10:3), Jesus was presenting himself in a similar role (the description of Joshua in Numbers 27:16-17 as one going out and in before the people as a shepherd is likely in the background of 10:1-4, 9). Subtle details of the text gain extra salience when read in terms of the pastoral theme within the gospel. The reference to the Sheep Gate or market in 5:2 (τῇ προβατικῇ) might be one of these. A further example could be the reference to the presence of much grass at

the sea (v.1; cf. Exodus 14-15) and is followed by a great multitude (v.2a), who saw the mighty signs that he performed. Jesus then ascends the mountain, where he sits with his disciples (cf. Exodus 24:9). These events occur around the time of the Passover (v.4). Having brought the people out, there is a crisis, as bread is needed for the multitude (v.5; cf. Exodus 16:3). This crisis is answered by miraculous provision (vv.10-13; cf. Exodus 16:4ff.). Following this miracle, John proceeds to record Jesus' walking upon the water (v.19), another action with Exodus echoes (Psalm 77:19). The discourse that follows these events explores the relationship between Jesus and the manna given to the Israelites in the wilderness under Moses' leadership (vv.30-59). Once again, Jesus is presented as the fulfilment of an Exodus type.

Further Exodus themes emerge in connection with the other gospels' record of the feeding of the five thousand and the events that surround it.<sup>18</sup> Here I will concentrate on Luke's account.<sup>19</sup> The fact that the people are numbered is noteworthy, as is the fact that it is only males that are counted: surely the scale of the miracle would be further emphasized were women and children included in the numbering. Jesus instructs his disciples to set the crowd down in groups of fifty. The counting and ordering of the adult males here is reminiscent of military numbering, such as occurred during Israel's sojourn in the wilderness (Numbers 1 and 26). More significantly, Israel left Egypt and entered into the Promise Land in companies of fifty (חֲמִשָּׁה—Exodus 13:18; Joshua 1:14).

Jesus delegates his rule over the 5,000, divided into groups of fifty, to his disciples. This is akin to the manner in which Moses delegated his judging of Israel to 'rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens' (Exodus 18:21). In Mark 6:40, the people are described as sitting down in ranks, in fifties and hundreds (καὶ ἀνέπεσον πρασιαὶ πρασιαί, ἀνὰ ἑκατὸν καὶ ἀνὰ πεντήκοντα), as if in military array.

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the site of the feeding of the five thousand (6:10—ἦν δὲ χόρτος πολλὸς ἐν τῷ τόπῳ). Jesus has led out the multitude like a flock (6:1-2) and now provides them with pasture (10:9).

<sup>18</sup> The typological background of the Exodus is not the only background present in the accounts of the feeding of the five thousand. There may also be reference to the five loaves of the showbread that David gave to his men in 1 Samuel 21:3 and to the miraculous food multiplication miracles of Elijah and Elisha, as in 2 Kings 4:42-44.

<sup>19</sup> The feeding of the five thousand is one of the few events that is recorded in each of the four gospels (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-14).

That twelve baskets of leftovers were gathered up is highlighted in all of the accounts of the event (Matthew 14:20; Mark 6:43; Luke 9:17; John 6:13) and Jesus later calls his disciples to reflect upon the significance of this fact (Matthew 16:9-10). I would suggest that the connection should be drawn between this number, the number of tribes of Israel, and the apostles' role in relation to them (cf. Luke 22:30).

While John's gospel situates the feeding of the five thousand upon a mountain (John 6:3), Luke speaks only of a deserted place (ἐν ἐρήμῳ—Luke 9:12). The 'mountain' comes later in the chapter, in the account of the transfiguration. In verse 28, Jesus ascends the mountain, accompanied by Peter, John, and James. In Exodus 24, Moses takes Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu and seventy elders with him up Mount Sinai. They see a divine theophany on the mountain (Exodus 24:10-11; Luke 9:29). The transfigured appearance of Christ also relates to Moses' transfigured appearance in Exodus 34:29-35.

Moses and Elijah appear and speak with Christ of the departure—ἔξοδος (9:31)—that he is about to accomplish in Jerusalem. Moses is the figure associated with the first exodus and Elijah the figure associated with the prophesied new exodus.<sup>20</sup> Peter proposes constructing three tabernacles in Luke 9:33: the plans for the tabernacle were given on Mount Sinai. A cloud comes and overshadows them in verse 34, presumably the theophanic cloud of God's presence (cf. Exodus 24:15), associated with Sinai, and, as expected, God speaks from the midst of it (v.35; Exodus 19:9; 33:9).

After descending from the mountain, there is an encounter with a multitude (v.37), much as Moses encountered the multitude of Israel when he descended Sinai in Exodus 32. Both Jesus and Moses encounter their representatives who have proved faithless in their task during the period of their absence on the mountain. Here the disciples are like Aaron and the people of Israel are like the demon-possessed child. Aaron could not restrain the Israelites and the disciples could not restrain the demon. The behaviour of the Israelites in Exodus 32:25 is described in a manner similar to that of demon possession. The impression is given in both accounts of a rebellion expressed in an extreme physical manner.

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<sup>20</sup> Watts 2000, 71ff.

The demon throws the boy down (ἐρρηξεν αὐτὸν τὸ δαιμόνιον—v.42) and ‘shatters’ him (v.39). The same verb (συντρίβω) is used in the LXX to describe the shattering of the tablets when Moses casts them to the ground at the foot of Sinai (Exodus 32:19). Jesus’ response is surprisingly accusatory: ‘O faithless and perverse generation [ὦ γενεὰ ἄπιστος καὶ διεστραμμένη], how long shall I be with you and bear with you?’ The clearest echoes are of the statements of YHWH and Moses concerning the children of Israel in the wilderness (cf. Exodus 16:28; Numbers 14:11, 27). In particular, one is reminded of Deuteronomy 32:20, where Israel is described as a ‘perverse generation, children in whom is no faith’ (LXX—τι γενεὰ ἐξεστραμμένη ἐστὶν υἱοὶ οἷς οὐκ ἔστιν πίστις ἐν αὐτοῖς).<sup>21</sup>

### ***3. Exodus Themes in Acts***

The extensive use of Exodus material continues well beyond the gospel texts. The book of Joshua is arguably the most important background for the book of Acts, with several parallels to its themes.<sup>22</sup> As the account of Joshua follows after the narrative of the Exodus, the book of Acts would seem implicitly to presuppose the Exodus typology of Luke’s gospel. The Church receives a commission from the one who accomplished the Exodus to prepare it for ‘conquest’ (Luke 24:46-49; cf. Deuteronomy 31:1-8). Authority and leadership is transferred, as the Spirit of the leader of the Exodus is given to his successor (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:1-8; 2:1-4; cf. Numbers 27:12-23; Deuteronomy 34:9).<sup>23</sup> Several holy war themes can be found in the text which follows.<sup>24</sup>

Luke’s account of Pentecost in Acts 2 provides a number of further examples of Exodus typology. Roger Stronstad argues that the events of the day of Pentecost echo the theophany at Sinai in various respects.<sup>25</sup> As in the Exodus narrative, it occurs on the mountain of God (cf. Exodus 3:1; 1 Kings 19:10), albeit this time upon the Temple Mount (cf. Isaiah 2:3; Micah 4:1; Zechariah 8:3). Stronstad:

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<sup>21</sup> Green 1997, 389

<sup>22</sup> Leithart & Barach 2011, 84-87

<sup>23</sup> Keener 2012, 713; Woudstra 1981, 32

<sup>24</sup> For instance, the signal judgment upon Ananias and Sapphira has various similarities to the story of the judgment upon Achan after the defeat at Ai in Joshua 7.

<sup>25</sup> Stronstad 2010, 52-53



[L]ike the theophany when God gave the Law to Israel it follows the pattern: (a) The Passover is celebrated. (b) There is then an interval of several weeks. (c) There are specific days of preparation. (d) The theophany itself happens in the morning.... However, whereas the theophany of Mt Sinai established Israel as a kingdom of priests, the theophany on the day of Pentecost establishes the disciples as a community of prophets.... [T]he creation of the disciples as a community of prophets is as epochal as the earlier creation of Israel as a kingdom of priests. That is, on the day of Pentecost, and for the second time in the history of his people, God is visiting his people on his holy mountain and mediating a new vocation for them—prophethood rather than royal priesthood.<sup>26</sup>

Kenneth Litwak writes:

There are several striking elements which suggest that Luke shaped his account on the basis of the Sinai tradition. Acts 2 opens with a theophany, which includes fire and a loud sound (Acts 2.1-4; cf. Exod. 19:16 [sound of a trumpet] and Exod. 19:18 [YHWH descended upon Sinai in fire]). At Sinai God spoke to Moses, and in Acts 2.11 the people hear the disciples speaking of the mighty works of God. On a broader level, the theophanic event in Acts 2.1-4 is formative for the first followers of the Way, just as the Sinai theophany was formative for God's people in Exodus.<sup>27</sup>

Both the giving of the Law and the giving of the Spirit involve a leader ascending on high to God's presence in the cloud, receiving the gift and then bestowing it upon the people (2:33; cf. 7:38). There are also possible verbal allusions to the Sinai theophany: “together” (Acts 2:1, cf. Exod 19:8), “sounds” (Acts 2:2, 6; Exod 19:16; “from heaven,” Acts 2:2, cf. Exod 20:22), and fire (Acts 2:3; Exod 19:18).<sup>28</sup> Beyond chronological coincidence, a more direct connection between the feast of Pentecost, the giving of the Law, and covenant renewal might be implied in such texts as Jubilees 6:17-21.<sup>29</sup>

The three thousand persons ‘cut to the heart’ (κατανύσσομαι) by Peter's message and saved on the day of Pentecost might also recall the three thousand persons killed at Sinai by the Levites in Exodus 32:25-29, an event associated with their consecration for divine service (verse 29). Like the Levites, Peter and

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Litwak 2005, 165-166

<sup>28</sup> Keener 2012, 785

<sup>29</sup> See Keener 2012, 785-787 for a discussion of the connection that developed between Pentecost and the giving of the Law at Sinai and Luke's possible use of such a tradition.

the disciples confront their ‘brethren’ and fellow Israelites (2:29; cf. Exodus 32:27, 29), who have committed a grave act of apostasy, rejecting the ascended leader God appointed for them (2:22-36; cf. Exodus 32:1). The connection between the hearers of Peter’s sermon and the Exodus generation is further strengthened by the allusion to Deuteronomy 32:5 (LXX— γενεὰ σκολιὰ καὶ διεστραμμένη) in verse 40 (σώθητε ἀπὸ τῆς γενεᾶς τῆς σκολιᾶς ταύτης).

Acts’ theme of the restored tabernacle (15:16-17) may also be present here. The description of the descent of the theophanic wind to fill the whole house recalls the sanctification of the tabernacle, as God’s glory and presence came upon it (Exodus 29:43; 40:34-35). The Spirit’s descent at Pentecost is a sanctification of the new tabernacle and its ministers for service.

Further Exodus background for the Pentecost event is found within the events of Numbers 11. In response to Moses’ complaint about the burden of leadership that is laid upon him, YHWH instructs him to assemble seventy of the elders of the nation and to bring them to the tabernacle of meeting. At the tabernacle of meeting, YHWH descends to speak with Moses, takes of the Spirit that is upon him and bestows it upon the seventy, so that they will be able to assist Moses in bearing the burden of the people.

The account bears a resemblance to the account of the Sinai theophany. First, both involve the granting of a new vocation to a body of people (Exodus 19:5-6; Numbers 11:16-17). Second, in both accounts the people are instructed in advance to sanctify themselves in preparation for YHWH’s coming (Numbers 11:18; cf. Exodus 19:10). Third, the seventy elders are situated around the tabernacle (Numbers 11:24), as the Israelites were assembled around Mount Sinai in Exodus 19. Fourth, there is a theophanic descent of YHWH in the cloud to speak with Moses (Exodus 19:9; Numbers 11:25). Finally, there is a gift from YHWH to the people, for which Moses serves as the intermediary:<sup>30</sup> the Law in Exodus 20 and the Spirit of Moses in Numbers 11.

In both a direct and indirect manner, Numbers 11 provides background to the account of Acts 2. As in Numbers 11, Pentecost establishes a participation in the ministry of the leader. While succession themes are present, as previously noted, the Spirit given to the assembled disciples at Pentecost is not a displacing

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<sup>30</sup> Williams 2003, 130-131

of Christ's authority, but a 'membering' and distribution of it.<sup>31</sup> The empowering Spirit received by the disciples remains *Jesus' Spirit*. In this respect, Pentecost follows the pattern of Numbers 11, where the seventy elders share in the distributed Spirit of Moses,<sup>32</sup> coming to participate in his ministry.<sup>33</sup>

Numbers 11:25 describes the occurrence of prophetic phenomena, functioning as an authenticating sign of the elders' reception of the Spirit (cf. 1 Samuel 10:6, 10-12). A ready parallel can be seen in the speaking in tongues associated with the day of Pentecost and later receptions of the Spirit in the book of Acts (Acts 2:4; 10:44-46).<sup>34</sup> As James Dunn argues and as the use of Joel 2:28-32 implies, Luke does not draw the same distinctions between tongues-speaking and prophecy that Paul does.<sup>35</sup>

Numbers 11 serves as a more indirect background for the events of Pentecost by means of the prophecy of Joel 2,<sup>36</sup> a text which Litwak regards as 'programmatic' for Luke's understanding of Pentecost.<sup>37</sup> Moses' wish that all of the people were prophets is seemingly to be fulfilled in Joel's prophecy that the Spirit will be poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:17-21). As John Barton observes, Joel's prophecy, 'reads almost as a fulfillment of Moses' hope expressed in Num. 11:29.'<sup>38</sup>

#### ***4. Exodus Themes in Romans***

Exodus themes and patterns continue into the epistles, framing both accounts of the salvation realized in Christ and the current experience of Christians. Of Romans 6-8, N.T. Wright remarks:

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<sup>31</sup> The description of the anomalous figures of Eldad and Medad in Numbers 11:26-29 may be alluded to in Luke 9:49-50 and perhaps also in the Gentile's reception of the Spirit in Acts 10.

<sup>32</sup> In light of Numbers 11:29, it seems natural to understand the Spirit spoken of in verses 17 and 25 as God's Spirit upon Moses, rather than Moses' own spirit.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. 132. The relationship between the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus at his own baptism in Luke 3:21-22 and the 'baptism' of the disciples at Pentecost is important to register here. The baptism of the Spirit at Pentecost incorporates the disciples into Christ's own anointed status and makes them participants in his ministry.

<sup>34</sup> Gordon Wenham equates the form of prophecy described in Numbers 11 with the glossolalia of Acts 2: 'the prophecy described here was probably an unintelligible ecstatic utterance, what the New Testament terms speaking in tongues, not the inspired, intelligible speech of the great Old Testament prophets and the unnamed prophets of the early church' (Wenham 1981, 109).

<sup>35</sup> Dunn 1975, 228. Isaacs 1976, 90-91, maintains that Paul is far more wary of ecstatic phenomena than Luke is.

<sup>36</sup> The two texts were related in rabbinic midrash, Treier 1997, 18-19.

<sup>37</sup> Litwak 2005, 162

<sup>38</sup> Barton 2001, 95

We could summarize the narrative sequence as follows: those who were enslaved in the “Egypt” of sin, an enslavement the law only exacerbated, have been set free by the “Red Sea” event of baptism, since in baptism they are joined to the Messiah, whose death and resurrection are accounted as theirs. They are now given as their guide, not indeed the law, which, although given by God, is unable to do more than condemn them for their sin, but the Spirit, so that the Mosaic covenant is replaced, as Jeremiah and Ezekiel said it would be, with the covenant written on the hearts of God’s people by God’s own Spirit.<sup>39</sup>

This Exodus pattern frames the current experience of Paul’s addressees, delivered from slavery to the Pharaoh of Sin through the waters of baptism, provided with the new mode of Torah-keeping in the Spirit and led by the Spirit, as the Israelites were by the pillar of cloud and fire, away from their past state of bondage to enjoyment of divine sonship in the Promised Land of the new creation.<sup>40</sup> These themes are most visible on the surface of the text in chapter 8:

In 8:12-17, Paul treats the Christians as precisely God’s new-Exodus people. They are led by God through their present wilderness (compare again 1 Cor 10:6-13). Their guide is the Spirit, who here takes up the role of the pillar of cloud and fire in the wilderness... They are “the sons of God,” echoing the language used by God, through Moses, to Pharaoh (Ex 4:22). They must not slide back into the state of slavery; they must not, that is, go back to Egypt. And if they are God’s children, currently being led through the wilderness, they are assured that they are also God’s heirs: the concept of “heir,” and the correlated concept of “inheritance,” are of course repeated over and over in the Pentateuch in reference to Israel’s promised inheritance of the land, the land to which their wilderness wanderings were leading them.<sup>41</sup>

Recognition of the Exodus background of Romans 6-8 can bring a number of neglected details of the text into crisper focus, enabling us to arrive at more textured readings than we might otherwise do. Our reading of the themes of slavery in chapter 6 is one example.

The Exodus is framed by God’s insistence that Pharaoh release his people so that they can ‘serve’ him (Exodus 7:16; 8:1, 20; 9:1, 13; 10:3). In Exodus there is more reference to slavery/servanthood with reference to what the Israelites are

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<sup>39</sup> Wright 1999, 29. See also Wright 2013, 1014.

<sup>40</sup> Wright 1999, 29

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. 29-30

*entering into* than with reference to what they are *coming out from*. The book of Exodus is not chiefly framed by a slave/free contrast. Indeed, themes of slavery with reference to Israel's state in Egypt are muted within it.<sup>42</sup> The book of Exodus (somewhat in contrast to Deuteronomy) speaks of bringing Israel out from bitter oppression, but does not typically characterize Israel as Pharaoh's servants. Israel is God's son and Pharaoh is wrongfully claiming and oppressing them.

Peter Williams suggests that, when Egypt is spoken of as the 'house of bondage' (or the 'house of servants'—בֵּית עֲבָדִים), it might not be the Israelites to whom reference is being made, but rather the *Egyptians*.<sup>43</sup> Throughout the narrative of the first few chapters of Exodus, consistent reference is made to the Egyptians as the 'servants' of Pharaoh (Exodus 7:10, 20; 8:3, 4, 9, 11, 21, 29, 31; 9:14, 20, 30, 34; 10:1, 6, 7; 11:3, 8; 12:30; 14:5). Israel is being delivered from the low status of cruel oppression by a land of servants (cf. Genesis 47:18-25) to consecration as the royal administrators of YHWH.

Entrance into this new service takes place at Sinai, where the covenant is cut and where the tabernacle and its service are instituted. The setting apart of Israel as a royal priesthood at Sinai was their entrance into a new form of servanthood. The story of the Exodus is the story of the movement from slavery to Pharaoh in the Egyptian house of bondage, building store cities, to service as royal priests in YHWH's house and building the tabernacle. Framing the Exodus narrative in terms of an antithesis between slavery and freedom can cause us to miss or understate primary themes within the text, muddying the relationship between the second half of the book and the overarching movement of the narrative. The fundamental contrast in Exodus is not between slavery and freedom but between two types of service—service of Pharaoh and service of YHWH.<sup>44</sup>

When this Exodus narrative serves as the resonance chamber for our reading of Romans 6, we will be less likely to be distracted by an overemphasis upon a paradox of slavery and freedom, recognizing the far more fundamental opposition between two forms of service: cruel oppression under Sin and the exalted status of priestly service of God. The most significant change that this

<sup>42</sup> A point highlighted in Williams 2013.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Leithart 2003a, 48-86 provides a detailed argument for the priest being a palace servant and steward of the royal household.

would make is that of bringing the world of the priesthood and the sacrificial system to the foreground of our imagination. In place of secular images of slavery, our treatment of this theme will now occur in terms of the very particular scriptural images of bondage in Egypt and the divine service of the tabernacle and temple.

By bringing the world of the priesthood and sacrificial system to the forefront of our minds, other subtle priestly themes of the passage start to emerge. When the passage speaks about ‘sanctification’ in verses 19 and 22, we can read this with a thicker sense: we are being *consecrated for priestly service* of God and access to his presence and ought to act in accordance with that fact. This consecration contrasts with the ‘uncleanness’ (verse 19) that previously characterized us. This, in turn, can strengthen the connection between the second half of Romans 6 and the first. This consecration for priestly service occurs definitively in the ritual of baptism. The ritual of baptism is patterned after the ritual of priestly installation in the Old Testament (cf. Exodus 40:12-15).<sup>45</sup> Baptism ritually establishes us as priestly servants within the house of God, and now we must render the obedience of those who have received the honour of being consecrated for such service.

Bringing the world of the priesthood, the tabernacle, and the sacrificial system to the foreground, we can also give more weight to possible sacrificial allusions within the text. When Paul speaks of ‘presenting’ (παρίστημι—Romans 6:13, 16, 19), he is using language that he later employs in a sacrificial context (cf. 12:1). Coupled with this fact, it should be noticed that sacrifices were presented in the form of their members—separated into their constituent parts. As we present our members to God, we are being rendered a living sacrifice.

There is an analogy to be observed between the priest and the sacrifice. The priests and the sacrificial animals are consecrated to YHWH in much the same way, becoming his possession. Priests had to be without disfigurement or defilement, like the sacrificial animals and were brought near through a similar process. In Numbers 3, YHWH claimed the Levites for himself and in 8:11, we see that the Levites were all offered as a ‘wave offering’ to God. The ‘living sacrifice’ of Romans 12:1 should be read in terms of this priestly background.

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<sup>45</sup> Leithart 2003a, 87ff.

Priestly consecration also involved the presenting of members for service to God. As part of the rite of priestly installation, the priest had blood daubed on his right big toe, his right ear, and the thumb of his right hand (Exodus 29:20). The ritual set apart the principal members of the body of the priest for divine service. Romans 6:13 may imply a similar thing occurring to the Christian. Having been washed with consecrating water (cf. Exodus 29:4), we must now present our members to God in service.

The themes that are more subtly present beneath the surface of the text in Romans 6 come to full and open expression in Romans 12:1: ‘I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.’ The priestly sacrifice of our bodies to God in consecrated service, enacted definitively in baptism, establishes the continuing pattern of our Christian life from that point onwards. As we are baptized into Christ and his priestly death, our bodies and the service of our members are rendered sacrifices that are well-pleasing to God.

Exodus themes continue in the book of Romans as Paul addresses the question of the current status of the nation of Israel by recounting the covenant history in chapter 9,<sup>46</sup> emphasizing the discriminating work of God’s electing purpose in the formation of his people over time. Moses, Pharaoh, and the events of the Exodus are brought forward as witnesses to the sovereignty of God’s will in shaping people, nations, and destinies over the course of history (Romans 9:14-17).<sup>47</sup>

### *5. Exodus Themes in Hebrews*

Within the non-Pauline epistles we encounter a number of allusions to the events of the Exodus generation.<sup>48</sup> By far the most intense cluster of these is

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<sup>46</sup> Wright 2013, 1158-1159

<sup>47</sup> Ridderbos 1997, 344 rightly stresses the importance of distinguishing the sense that ‘election’ has in this passage and that which it has in much later Christian theology: election here is not an eternal decree of election and reprobation, but refers to God’s covenant purpose worked out in the formation of the nation of Israel through history.

<sup>48</sup> A detailed study of the extensive Exodus themes in the book of Revelation is beyond the scope of this present chapter. Revelation’s use of the Old Testament is highly allusive, with no clear direct quotations. Working with categories suggested by Devorah Dimant, Jon Paulien argues that Revelation uses the Old Testament ‘compositionally’, rather than ‘expositionally’ (Cole & Petersen 2014, 31). Rather than treating the Old Testament text as its object of interpretation, the book of Revelation appropriates the imagery and symbolism of the Old Testament as the medium

found within the book of Hebrews. Throughout the book of Hebrews, the narrative of the first Exodus provides the foil for the salvation accomplished in Christ and the present state of Christian believers. Much of the substance of the book's theological argument arises from this juxtaposition of these two narratives.

The argument of the opening chapter, establishing the superiority of the Son over the angels finds much of its rationale in 2:1-4. The 'word spoken through angels' of verse 2, with its attendant judgments would seem to be the revelation of Sinai.<sup>49</sup> Luke Timothy Johnson writes:

Although "the word" (*logos*) spoken through angels could refer to all of God's former revelation, the author seems specifically to have in mind the revelation of the law on Mount Sinai (Exod 19-31)... [T]raditions in contemporary Judaism connected the ministry of angels to the giving of the law (see *Jub.* 5.1-2, 6, 13; 6.22; 50.1-2; Gal 3:19; Acts 7:30, 38, 53). The combination "transgression and disobedience," furthermore, is appropriate in the context of the revelation of commandments...<sup>50</sup>

The *a fortiori* argument of the following verses demonstrates the greater certainty of the salvation that the Lord's word has brought. This salvation is described in terms redolent of the Exodus, as Gareth Cockerill recognizes:

"Signs and wonders" was a set description of the great miracles by which God had delivered Israel from Egypt (Deut 4:34; 6:22; Ps 135:9; Jer 32:20-21). The same God bore witness to the ministries of Jesus (Acts 2:22), Paul (Rom 15:19), and the other apostles (2 Cor 12:12) through "signs," "wonders," and "miracles." Thus "signs and wonders" affirmed not only the validity of God's word in the Son but the continuity of this word with his Sinai revelation...<sup>51</sup>

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for the production of a distinct text. The Old Testament is the 'cave of resonant signification' within which Revelation is to be heard (Ibid. 34). From the allusions within John's opening greeting of 1:4-6 onwards, the Exodus is important background to the book of Revelation. Exodus allusions can be found in such details as the two witnesses of chapter 11, the woman brought into the wilderness by eagle's wings in chapter 12 (cf. Exodus 19:4), the plagues, the seven trumpets and the fall of the harlot's city (cf. Joshua 6), and the singing of the Song of Moses (15:1-5). See Beale 1999, 643ff.

<sup>49</sup> Johnson 2006, 84

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. 87

<sup>51</sup> Cockerill 2012, 122



The author of Hebrews presenting Jesus as the ‘pioneer of salvation’ (2:10—τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν), the one ‘leading many sons to glory’ (πολλοὺς υἱοὺς εἰς δόξαν ἀγαγόντα). Cockerill writes of this description:

“Pioneer,” is not used of Moses in the LXX. However, when the people rebelled at Kadesh-Barnea (3:7-19), they wanted to choose “another” ἀρχηγὸς to replace Moses (Num 14:4). Moses led God’s “son” (singular) out of Egypt toward the Promised Land (Exod 4:21; Hos 11:1) just as this Pioneer leads the “sons and daughters” to glory...<sup>52</sup>

Jesus enters into the state of his brethren, destroys the personified figure of death—the devil—and releases those formerly subject to bondage (vv.14-15).<sup>53</sup> This description of Jesus evokes the story of Moses, with whom Jesus is compared in the verses that follow—3:1-6.<sup>54</sup> Once again, the author of Hebrews is concerned to demonstrate the superiority of Christ and his salvation: Moses is the servant in the house, while Christ is the Son over the house. As Johnson observes, the reference to Moses’ faithfulness in all of God’s house is an allusion to Numbers 12:7, where it is related to Moses’ ‘astonishing intimacy with God.’<sup>55</sup> Moses is one who saw the glory of God. However, the Son is worthy of more glory than Moses (3:3—πλείονος γὰρ οὗτος δόξης παρὰ Μωϋσῆν ἡξίωται) as the one who is himself the brightness of the Father’s glory (1:3).

Moses’ faithfulness in God’s house has a figural and prophetic force, functioning as an anticipation of the greater faithfulness of the Son that is to come:

[W]e are to understand that Moses was faithful “to give evidence of things yet to be spoken” (*eis martyrion tōn lalēthēsomenōn*). Just as in the prologue the contrast was between the things said of old through the prophets and that which is spoken now through the Son, so here the faith of Moses as a servant in the house finds its full expression in the “finisher of faith,” Jesus (12:2). In 11:26 Moses “considered the reproach of the Messiah as greater wealth than the treasure of Egypt.” He is therefore also a model for Christians, who are exhorted by the author to “go outside the camp bearing his reproach” (13:13).<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid. 138n63

<sup>53</sup> Giving aid to the seed of Abraham (verse 16) might recall Exodus 3:15-16.

<sup>54</sup> Cockerill 2012, 138

<sup>55</sup> Johnson 2006, 108

<sup>56</sup> Ibid. 110

The prophetic force of the Exodus events and their congruency with the situation of the hearers of the epistle is the basis of much of the argument that follows. The author of Hebrews forcefully highlights the symmetry between the paradigmatic state of the Israelites in the wilderness and that of the recipients of the epistle, as he addresses them with the exhortation of Psalm 95:7-11.<sup>57</sup> They too are faced with the decision between wavering in unbelief or seeking to go back, or pressing forward in faith to inherit the promise. This symbolic situation of believers in the wilderness state is not unique to Hebrews (see the treatment of 1 Corinthians 10 below), but is most developed within it.

Perhaps most striking is the manner in which Hebrews ‘christianizes’ the experience of the Old Testament Israelites. In establishing the analogy between the Israelites in the wilderness and the recipients of his epistle in 4:2, the author employs the verb *εὐαγγελίζω*, and ‘reverses the expected order’ in his statement: ‘He does not say that they received the good news as we did, but the opposite: we were evangelized just as they were—the speaking of God to the people was a proclamation of “good news.”’<sup>58</sup> He also relates the promise held out to the wilderness generation to the promise of eternal rest held out to his recipients. The Promised Land is recast as a provisional and anticipatory sign of the greater promise of rest that has yet to be realized.<sup>59</sup> Hebrews reinforces this point in 11:9 and 13-16, and presents the faith of Old Testament saints in new covenant terms (cf. 11:19, 26).

The manner in which the two axes of the typology of Hebrews operates is worthy of attention. While the relationship between the experience of the Old Testament Israelites and the Church could be represented primarily as an escalation upon a horizontal axis, within the typology of Hebrews it is vertical axis of typology that is most prominent.<sup>60</sup> Types relate to realities on a higher plane—the promise of rest in the land to the promise of a greater rest (4:1-10), the service of the earthly tabernacle to the service of the heavenly (8:4-5), the Promised Land to the heavenly country (11:9, 13-16). However, for the author,

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<sup>57</sup> As Luke Timothy Johnson observes, the book of Hebrews ‘stands within a long—and continuing—tradition of inner-biblical exegesis and inner-Jewish critique, when it rereads the story of the wilderness and uses it for hortatory purposes in the present.’ Johnson 2006, 122.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. 125

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. 126

<sup>60</sup> The horizontal axis is by no means absent, of course, not least because the awaited heavenly city is eschatological in character.

the faith of the Old Testament saints always approached these things with an anagogic hermeneutic, understanding them, not merely as an ‘escalation’ upon the same (horizontal) plane, but as a (vertical) ‘elevation’ of them through a sort of *via eminentiae*. On account of his suggestion that the Old Testament saints operated in terms of an anagogical hermeneutic (observe the significance of the visible/invisible polarity in his definition of faith—11:1-3), the author of Hebrews can posit a radical continuity between the faith of Old Testament saints and Christian believers.<sup>61</sup>

Within the rest of the epistle, the author makes reference to the institution of the Levitical priesthood under Moses (cf. 7:14), and the tabernacle and its service established on Sinai as a ‘copy and shadow of the heavenly things’ (8:4-5; 9:1-10). Contrasting with the old covenant formed at Sinai, Hebrews speaks of the formation of a better covenant to address the problems of the old (8:7-13). Like the covenant at Sinai, this new covenant must be dedicated with blood, through the death of Christ, the testator (διαθέμενος).

Chapter 10 returns to the analogy and contrast between the revelation through Moses and that received in Christ and the greater judgment faced by those who reject the latter (10:26-30), referencing Moses’ song of Deuteronomy 32 in verse 30. 11:22-31 presents the faith surrounding the Exodus as continuous with that of new covenant Christians. Verse 26 speaks of Moses ‘esteeming the reproach of Christ [τὸν ὀνειδισμόν τοῦ Χριστοῦ] greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.’ Nathan MacDonald concludes a helpful discussion of historical readings of this verse with the observation:

For Calvin Moses’ faith is exhibited in identification with Christ, through the people of God, for the Old Testament church as much as the New Testament church are the body of Christ. For him a belief in the mystical body of Christ does not require that the τοῦ χριστοῦ need be interpreted of the people of God separate from Christ, as in the case with Grotius, for whom the people of God are only a type of the coming Messiah.... [W]e might say that the real presence of Christ is to be found in Old Testament history as the mystical body of Christ, broken and reproached.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> As Hebrews 3-4 reveals, this continuity extends to the promise extended to the Israelites in the wilderness and Christians. The promise that was met with unbelief by the Israelites is the same promise that is presented to the Church, albeit in a more open and urgent form.

<sup>62</sup> Bauckham 2009, 382

The establishment of such a relationship between the old and new covenant people of God would have much in common with Paul's approach in 1 Corinthians 10, to which we will turn shortly.

Hebrews 12:18-29 frames the contrast between the terrifying theophany of Mount Sinai to the unbelieving Exodus generation and the blessed access that we enjoy to Mount Zion and the city of the living God.<sup>63</sup> As in 2:1-4, the author presents an *a fortiori* argument for the need to respond appropriately to the greater revelation and privilege that has come in Christ. The final chapter calls the recipients of the epistle to be prepared to follow Christ in an exodus from the camp in hope of the city to come (13:12-14). Finally, the benediction of verse 20-21 contains a very strong echo of Isaiah 63:11:

Hebrews 13:20—Ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης, ὁ ἀναγαγὼν ἐκ νεκρῶν τὸν ποιμένα τῶν προβάτων τὸν μέγαν ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης αἰωνίου, τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν,

Isaiah 63:11 (LXX)—καὶ ἐμνήσθη ἡμερῶν αἰωνίων ὁ ἀναβιβάσας ἐκ τῆς γῆς τὸν ποιμένα τῶν προβάτων ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ θεὸς ἐν αὐτοῖς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον

Read against the background of Isaiah 63, this establishes a parallel between Christ and Moses and between the Exodus and the resurrection.<sup>64</sup>

### 6. 1 Corinthians 10 and the Use of Typology

Perhaps the most notable New Testament reference to the Red Sea crossing is found in 1 Corinthians 10:1-2, in the context of Paul's extended presentation of the experience of the Israelites as a figure and cautionary example for the Corinthian Christians. The passage in which these verses are situated is a *locus classicus* for the discussion of typology. Its significance for our purposes arises in no small measure from the way that it reveals or reflects Paul's approach to the Old Testament narrative more generally, and the relationship that he sees between Christians and the story of Israel.

<sup>63</sup> The city of the living God spoken of in verse 22 would appear to be related to the eschatological city (13:14) that we still await.

<sup>64</sup> An interesting detail here is the substitution of γῆ in the LXX for אֶרֶץ. There is a striking symmetry between the image of bringing up Moses and Israel 'from the earth' and raising up the Lord Jesus 'from the dead'.

Various commentators have reflected upon the specific connections and details of Paul's typology.<sup>65</sup> As the focus of this thesis is upon the Red Sea crossing and its relationship to baptism, I will focus upon verses 1-2 here. Although some older commentators claim that the language of baptism in relation to the Red Sea crossing draws upon the theology of Jewish proselyte baptism, most recent commentators regard this as an employment of Christian terminology, and argue that baptism into Christ must provide the lens for our understanding here.<sup>66</sup> B.J. Oropeza wonders whether Paul's reference to 'baptism into Moses' is designed as a response to the Corinthians' attribution of magical powers to invoked names, and their belief that baptism conferred a sort of immunity.<sup>67</sup> The exact import of 'baptism into Moses' is also debated. Beasley-Murray and Thiselton both argue that adherence or allegiance to Moses is more likely to be in view than some 'mystical movement'.<sup>68</sup> It seems most likely that Moses here functions primarily as a type of Christ.

The identification of the cloud with the Spirit is common.<sup>69</sup> The cloud does not merely denote the presence of the element of water over the Israelites, but is a theophanic manifestation.<sup>70</sup> Oropeza suggests that Paul's treatment of the baptism in the cloud reveals an Isaianic influence, whose understanding and framing of the crossing and wilderness experience of Israel, especially with regard to the identification of the cloud with the Spirit, mediates Paul's theological appropriation of the event.<sup>71</sup> A reading that ascribes differing significance to the cloud and the sea, rather than operating in terms of a tenuous relation between the visual image and baptismal submersion seems to represent a more promising approach at this juncture.<sup>72</sup>

The weight that we ought to give to Paul's statements in this context is a matter of some debate. Does Paul's use of the wilderness experience of Israel in this passage amount to more than an allegorical plundering of Old Testament narratives for his immediate purposes? Are the Exodus texts condemned to the

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<sup>65</sup> See Porter & Cross 1999, 334 for discussion of some of the grammar of the passage.

<sup>66</sup> Davidson 1981, 214

<sup>67</sup> Oropeza 2000, 89-90

<sup>68</sup> Thiselton 2000, 725; Beasley-Murray 1972, 182-183

<sup>69</sup> Garland 2003, 452; Conzelmann 1975, 166; Kline 1968, 68ff.; Lundberg 1942, 140-142; Yarnold 1994, 108; McDonnell & Montague 1994, 45.

<sup>70</sup> Vander Hart 2001, 26-30

<sup>71</sup> Oropeza 2000, 93ff.

<sup>72</sup> Contra Davidson 1981, 216-218

slavery of forming bricks for the Pauline theological edifice? Here the more general question of the relationship between the story of the Church and the story of Israel takes particular form in the hermeneutical question of the relationship between the different senses of the text of Exodus.<sup>73</sup>

Paul's statements are certainly startling. Stephen Finlan suggests:

Paul not only interprets OT types, he sometimes sees the antitype in the type. Regarding the water-bearing rock that appeared to the Israelites in the desert, Paul says "the Rock was Christ" (1 Cor 10:4). And when Moses and his followers passed through the sea, they were "baptized" in it (10:2). Thus, Christianity was already present in embryonic form in the OT.<sup>74</sup>

Some, such as Dunn, see Paul to be engaging in an imaginative retrojecting of the Church's experience into Old Testament texts (a 'midrashic allegory'<sup>75</sup>), in whose ground it finds little natural purchase, but which have become subjected to the control of an external vantage point established by Christ's revelation and redemption.<sup>76</sup>

Raymond Collins understands Paul's argument somewhat differently from Dunn:

Some of the Apostolic Fathers (*Barn.* 7:3, 7, 10, 11; 12:2, 5, 6, 10; 13:5; Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho* 42:4) used *typos* in reference to the prefiguration of events related to salvation history in Jesus Christ. Along with Rom 5:14, 1 Cor 10:6, 11 is often cited as a NT warrant for a typological reading of the Bible. Paul, however, is not to be seen as a proponent of patristic hermeneutics. He uses *typos* to present a model, the

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<sup>73</sup> And also in the question of whether Paul's *historical* reading of a pre-existent Christ into the narrative can find any support in the literal sense of the Old Testament itself.

<sup>74</sup> Finlan 2005, 30

<sup>75</sup> Dunn 1970, 112

<sup>76</sup> "So in I Cor. 10 the Red Sea crossing and the wilderness experiences are only 'sacraments' because they are seen in the light of and draw their significance as 'sacraments' from the spiritual realities of the new age, the Christian era (hence they are written for *our* instruction, who live in eschatological days). In these verses Paul is not really talking about manna and water, but about the spiritual nourishment which *Christ* gives Christians; he is not really talking about a 'baptism' in the Red Sea to Moses, but of baptism in the Spirit into Christ. For the Israelites these events were not sacraments; they were events of deliverance naked and simple. But we can regard them as 'sacraments', in the same way as we can regard the Israelites as 'our fathers' (v. 1), because *their* concrete experience of (literal, physical) redemption is an allegory of *our* concrete experience of (spiritual) redemption." Dunn 1970, 126-127. However, see Dunn 1998, 279-280, where he admits the possibility of a historical reference in addition to the allegorical reference, as 'the divine wisdom which oversaw Israel in the wilderness can now ... be recognized in and as Christ.' Fee 1987, 446 questions whether Dunn's approach is occasionally affected by his 'antisacramental stance'.

*paradeigma* of Hellenistic rhetoric, from which the Corinthians are to learn.<sup>77</sup>

Richard Hays is reluctant to press the particular metaphors of 1 Corinthians 10 very far: ‘each of these figurations ... considered individually, bears only slight “assertorial weight”’<sup>78</sup> However, he believes that the passage ‘lays bare the hermeneutical assumptions that govern Paul’s references to Scripture throughout the letter.’<sup>79</sup> The success of the rhetorical strategy itself ‘depends on the reader’s acquiescence to the fitness of the elaborate Israel/Church correspondence created by the metaphor.’<sup>80</sup> David Garland appears to give slightly more weight to the individual figurations, while expressing caution about attempts to argue for more extensive connections:

Paul does not interpret the text allegorically in the way that Theodoret, for example, does. Theodoret goes so far as to identify the sea as the baptismal font, the cloud as the grace of the Spirit, Moses as the priest, his rod as the cross, and the pursuing Egyptians as the devils. Paul “does not seek a point-for-point correspondence; he is satisfied with the exemplary character of the history of Israel in one specific respect: apparently the cloud is the sign of the divine presence, and to this the Spirit in baptism corresponds” (Conzelmann 1975: 166). But the cloud and the sea also signify removal and partition from Egypt’s bondage and its idolatry.<sup>81</sup>

For Hays, Paul does not treat the story of Israel merely as an instructive example for the Church, but as a prefiguration of it.<sup>82</sup> The applicability of the example of Israel for the Church is grounded in the fact of the incorporation of the Corinthian Christians into Israel (‘our fathers,’ v.1),<sup>83</sup> and in Paul’s ‘deliberate policy’ of reading the Scriptures as a ‘direct word of address’ to the eschatological community of the Church.<sup>84</sup>

Hays contends that Paul’s use of the Exodus story at this juncture is not to be construed as an act of violence committed against the original text. Paul is not

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<sup>77</sup> Collins 1999, 370

<sup>78</sup> Hays 1989, 91. See also Hays 1997, 160-161.

<sup>79</sup> Hays 2005, 12

<sup>80</sup> Hays 2005, 12

<sup>81</sup> Garland 2003, 452

<sup>82</sup> Hays 1989, 95

<sup>83</sup> Davidson 1981, 209-210: ‘The phrase “our fathers” provides the basis upon which the correspondences drawn in succeeding verses can be made.’

<sup>84</sup> Hays 1989, 95-97, 166

denying the Exodus story its own integrity and significance, or suggesting that the meaning of its events is entirely derivative and extrinsic. He writes:

This brings us to the heart of the matter. Typology is before all else a trope, an act of imaginative correlation. If one pole of the typological correlation annihilates the other, the metaphorical tension disappears, and the trope collapses. The viability of the Israel/church typology depends, for Paul's purposes, on maintaining the separate integrity of both poles. The church discovers its true identity only in relation to the sacred story of Israel, and the sacred story of Israel discovers its full significance—so Paul passionately believed—only in relation to God's unfolding design for salvation of the Gentiles in the church.<sup>85</sup>

He proceeds to argue that, within typological pairings, the weight is not generally evenly distributed, but 'one or the other will become the center of gravity for meaning.'<sup>86</sup> For Hays, the centre of gravity in Paul's typology is firmly located in the Church, rather than in the story of Israel: '[Paul's] thought moves back to the Old Testament from the present datum, baptism, and certainly does not vice versa derive baptism from the Old Testament.'<sup>87</sup> Furthermore, in contrast to the typology of Hebrews, Paul is ecclesiocentric, rather than christocentric.<sup>88</sup>

Hays appears to go further than Dunn, giving a thicker theological justification and rationale for the analogy that supports Paul's tropological argument in this passage. Nonetheless, he still displays considerable reticence in giving much weight to the Old Testament pole in Paul's typology. Paul's reading is presented as an imaginative Christian reframing of the scriptural narrative on the basis of the Corinthians' genuine participation in the life of Israel, but one for which little support may be forthcoming from the original texts. Paul's use of typology in 1 Corinthians 10 may be grounded upon a theological conviction that an intrinsic ontological connection exists between Israel and the Church, but the specific typological connections that Paul draws find their source less in the historical events or canonical texts themselves, than in a Spirit-illuminated imagination ('...Paul's fanciful reading of Christ back into the exodus'<sup>89</sup>).

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<sup>85</sup> Hays 1989, 100-101

<sup>86</sup> Hays 1989, 101

<sup>87</sup> Hans Conzelmann, cited in Hays 1989, 101-102.

<sup>88</sup> Hays 1989, 98-99

<sup>89</sup> Hays 1989, 97



N.T. Wright is rather more prepared than Hays to suggest that Paul derived his understanding of baptism from the Exodus:

‘[O]ur fathers’ experienced the exodus! The *our* is positively breathtaking, unless one had fully grasped already the extent to which Paul sees the Messiah’s people as the heirs of Abraham. Here is the family story, he says, into which you have been incorporated. It began, precisely, with baptism: the cloud and the sea, the divine presence leading them safely through the water while the pursuing Egyptians were drowned. The fact that Paul can assume this connection so effortlessly makes its own point: baptism is a going-through-the-water initiation-into-the-community event: why look elsewhere than the exodus for its origins? Was that not, perhaps, something at least to do with John the Baptist’s motivation in choosing the river Jordan for his own baptist movement, calling Israel to repentance in the very place where Moses had delivered his final charge?<sup>90</sup>

Thiselton places a tradition of canonical and extracanonical reflection upon the Exodus narrative that Paul may have been drawing upon—especially relating to the role of Wisdom—more clearly in the foreground of his account.<sup>91</sup> In Paul’s arresting claim that the rock of which the Israelites drank in the wilderness was Christ—ἡ πέτρα δὲ ἦν ὁ Χριστός (v.4)—he was presenting the pre-existent Christ as active within the history of Israel, ascribing to Christ the role many gave to Wisdom.<sup>92</sup> If we can root such claims within a tradition of reflection, particularly one which is already underway within the canon itself,<sup>93</sup> the uses of the Exodus narratives and patterns within the New Testament need no longer be regarded as mere impositions upon or appropriations of them, but more as organic developments from and out of them. Although Hays is undoubtedly correct in maintaining that Paul’s typology is not Israelcentric, if more substantial engagement with the scriptural text lies behind Paul’s claims, the Old Testament pole of Paul’s typology will be accorded greater significance and weight.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Wright 2013, 420-421

<sup>91</sup> Thiselton 2000, 726-730. Thiselton puts less weight upon the rabbinic tradition of a moveable well, preferring to focus upon traditions whose existence at the time of Paul’s writing is more readily demonstrable.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. 729-730

<sup>93</sup> ‘On the rock Cullmann suggests that some part was played by Deut 8:15; 32:13; Neh 9:15; Isa 48:21; and Pss 78:15-20; 81:16 et al., as well as the Exodus material.’ Ibid. 729.

<sup>94</sup> As Simon Gathercole maintains, ‘early Jewish wisdom speculation is not *decisive* for Paul’s employment of preexistence... Habermann makes the key observation that Jesus Christ is always the criterion for preexistence in Paul, rather than there being a shadowy preexistent entity which is in a secondary sense christological. Kammler’s observation is correct, then, that “the pre-existence of Christ in Paul ... is conceived as *absolute, real, and personal*’ (Gathercole 2006, 31).

In addition to operating within a tradition of reflection upon the Exodus texts, Paul's presentation of the pre-existent Christ as active within the history of Israel is a dimension of his reading that could bolster the Old Testament pole of his typology. While this position could be understood as a forceful requisitioning and colonization of Israel's Scriptures, within the framework of his Christian faith, for which the texts of the Old Testament were already regarded as *Christian* Scripture, it gives the pole of the Old Testament considerably more importance than it might otherwise enjoy.

Midrashic allegory (Dunn), theologically-grounded trope (Hays), or mythological example embellished for the sake of rhetorical purposes (Collins) all grant considerable hermeneutical licence to the apostle in his reading of Old Testament Scriptures. However, a *historical* claim about the pre-existent Christ's agency in the Exodus and other events recorded in the Old Testament, while entailing a considerably more daring position regarding the referent of key Old Testament Scriptures—and one which might jeopardize the Old Testament's 'discrete voice' if handled injudiciously—could nonetheless rescue the Old Testament's literal sense from abandonment or denigration by the Church. If the personal agency of the pre-existent Christ is to be found within the concrete events of the history of Israel, and not only as they serve as weak figures of future events, the history of Israel and the literal sense of the text that records it will gain added significance in their own right.

In the last chapter, I spoke of the dangers inherent in many type/antitype and shadow/reality oppositions, in particular the potential of such approaches to evacuate the Old Testament Scriptures of their force. By presenting the antitype as present within the type and the reality within the shadow, the ultimate referent of the Old Testament texts is seen to be nothing less than Christ himself. Christ would thus be seen to be the 'verbal root' and *res* of both testaments.

Of course, such readings of the real presence of Christ within the Old Testament have New Testament precedent and a strong pedigree within the Church.<sup>95</sup> They can be means of resolving genuine conundrums posed by the literal sense of the text, such as the implied deity of the Angel of YHWH in such

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<sup>95</sup> I have already remarked upon examples in John and the implied association between Michael and Jesus in Luke at the end of the previous chapter (see also Gathercole 2006, 52). Jude 5 might be another possible example (Ibid. 36ff.).

places as Exodus 3 or of the third angel in Genesis 18 (cf. 19:1). Justin Martyr writes of Exodus 3:

For at that juncture, when Moses was ordered to go down into Egypt and lead out the people of the Israelites who were there, and while he was tending the flocks of his maternal uncle in the land of Arabia, our Christ conversed with him under the appearance of fire from a bush, and said, "Put off your shoes, and draw near and hear." And he, when he had put off his shoes and drawn near, heard that he was to go down into Egypt and lead out the people of the Israelites there; and he received mighty power from Christ, who spoke to him in the appearance of fire, and went down and led out the people, having done great and marvellous things; which, if you desire to know, you will learn them accurately from his writings.<sup>96</sup>

Irenaeus also appeals to the action of the pre-existent Christ to resolve the puzzle of Genesis 18:

And again, referring to the destruction of the Sodomites, the Scripture says, "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven." For it here points out that the Son, who had also been talking with Abraham, had received power to judge the Sodomites for their wickedness.<sup>97</sup>

Locating Christ in the perplexing interstices of the Old Testament witness in such a manner can honour the importance of the literal sense of the text, while taking with full seriousness the New Testament indications of Christ's pre-existent activity.

In a lengthy treatment of the passage in his work on the subject of typology, Richard Davidson outlines some of the various readings given of Paul's reference to baptism at the Red Sea in 1 Corinthians 10.<sup>98</sup> Davidson claims that Paul's understanding of baptism into Christ provides the terms in which he construes the Red Sea crossing as 'baptism' into Moses,<sup>99</sup> an event which exists in 'historical correspondence' with baptism into Christ.<sup>100</sup> Davidson cautions against an overly restrictive reading of the passage, which would 'too hastily

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<sup>96</sup> Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, chapter 62

<sup>97</sup> Irenaeus, *Against All Heresies*, III.6.1

<sup>98</sup> Davidson 1981, 216-218

<sup>99</sup> Davidson 1981, 213-214. Davidson argues that the connection with baptism is not mediated by a connection between the Red Sea crossing and proselyte baptism.

<sup>100</sup> Davidson 1981, 218

circumscribe the theological significance of Israel's baptism.'<sup>101</sup> The correspondence that Paul draws 'is essentially soteriological and Christological, but the extent of the correspondence includes specific detailed historical parallels that are involved in the salvation events.'<sup>102</sup> Davidson contrasts with both Dunn and Hays in placing weight upon the particular details of the typological relationship that Paul draws, and not merely upon the theological correspondence that grounds Paul's 'imaginative correlation'.

Davidson argues that Paul 'conceived of Israel's "baptism" as an *advance presentation* of Christian baptism' effected according to divine intent.<sup>103</sup> Although typology may speak of a real connection between events, institutions, and persons, the exact location, strength, and source of this connection can be a matter of considerable divergence. Davidson holds a particularly strong view of typology, stressing the necessity of the presumed historicity of types and antitypes:<sup>104</sup>

There is an historical correspondence between OT and NT persons, events, and institutions. By divine design the OT realities are advance-presentations of corresponding (but absolutely "escalated") NT realities, and there is a *devoir-être* relationship between the OT realities and the NT fulfillments.<sup>105</sup>

By virtue of this *devoir-être* or prophetic relationship, Davidson accords a considerably greater weight to the Old Testament pole of the typological connection. Davidson makes the daring claim that, rather than being retrospectively assimilated to the New Testament witness, the Old Testament genuinely anticipates it. Perhaps one of the most immediately apparent dangers of Davidson's approach is that, with its focus on typological relationships between events, it can become inattentive to the actual relations that are and are not explored and highlighted within the biblical texts and by specific biblical authors.<sup>106</sup> The weight of Davidson's emphasis upon the historicity of types and

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<sup>101</sup> Davidson 1981, 218-219

<sup>102</sup> Davidson 1981, 221

<sup>103</sup> Davidson 1981, 222

<sup>104</sup> Davidson 1981, 10-12

<sup>105</sup> Davidson 1981, 397

<sup>106</sup> Fee expresses his reservations about Davidson's approach, stating: 'Paul is simply trying to establish his point, that Israel had its own form of baptism. To overload the symbols with a vast array of meanings, some of which are in actual conflict, seems to go far beyond the author's

antitypes and upon the providential ordering of the typological elements is unusual among commentators.<sup>107</sup>

Although most typological approaches function in terms of a real relation between Israel and the Church, the supposed nature of this relation is far from a matter of universal agreement. In some contexts it may take a profoundly supercessionist form, as an emphasis on the vertical movement from image and figure to reality and truth—such as one finds in the book of Hebrews—devolves into a Platonizing scheme, in which any horizontal historical relationship is minimized—which, as I have argued, does *not* occur in the book of Hebrews. When this occurs, the Old Testament can be subjected to a spiritualizing reading that evacuates its text of weight, rendering it merely derivative and illustrative in meaning, and condemning it to a lower plane from that of the spiritual reality of the Christian faith.<sup>108</sup>

Opposing any such radical disconnect between Israel and the Church is Paul's description of the Israelites as 'our fathers' in verse 1. Thiselton articulates this well:

The key theological point here concerns Paul's use of ἡμῶν, **our**, for Israelites in the Mosaic era as the *fathers* of the Gentile-Christian or

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intent' and 'in this case Davidson's prior interest in typology, not simply as prefiguring but in some way as being *devoir-être* ("must needs be"), goes beyond Paul's concerns in the text itself.' Fee 1987, 446, 447.

<sup>107</sup> Glenny 1997, 628. Brevard Childs expresses reservations regarding typology, seemingly grounded in a concern for the primacy of the literal sense of the text and the historical connection and continuity between the two testaments (Xun 2010, 125-128). In contrast with prophecy and fulfilment, much typology appears to Childs to present an attenuated bond between the two testaments, rather than sufficiently expressing their firm ontological relationship: the texts are ultimately bound together in the reality that comes to fulfilment in Christ, rather than by the weaker threads of typological tropes. Although typology may bear a secondary witness to the ontological relationship, it cannot bear its weight. Notwithstanding these concerns, Childs believes that typology cannot be lightly dismissed: 'In sum, the problems of interpretation with which typology and allegory wrestled, even if poorly formulated, touch on basic theological issues of the Christian faith which have not been satisfactorily resolved. Certainly the conformity of the two testaments cannot be correctly understood as merely lying on the level of culture, tradition, and religion.' Childs 1993, 14. It would seem that Childs' resistance to a typological 'method' presumes the insufficiency of typology to bear the weight of a robust ontological relationship between and within the testaments, a judgment with which I find myself unable to concur. Employing the Augustinian metaphor mentioned in the previous chapter, we can regard typology as bearing witness to the ontological reality as a single verbal root is expressed in various typological conjugations (Leithart 2003a, 37-38). The sufficiency of typology to the securing of a firm relationship must however be borne out by the actual exegesis.

<sup>108</sup> Glenny 1997, 631-632. Such a view is more likely to be found in contexts where the providential ordering of the typological relationship is stressed, as such ordering can support the existence of a relation without positing the same immediate connection between the reality of the typological elements themselves.

mixed Christian community at Graeco-Roman Corinth. Goppelt insists on this point. Whatever the novelties and discontinuities brought about by the new creation in Christ, Israel and the Christian church belong to a single *history* of God's activity and self-disclosure. Irenaeus and other later Church Fathers, especially those who confronted Marcionism, were at pains to cite Paul's insistent theme that the experiences, failures, or lessons drawn from ancient Israel remain "for our instruction."<sup>109</sup>

This relationship between Israel and the Church is one way in which typological relations between Israel and the Church are grounded in an historical and ontological connection.

For Hays, Paul is engaging in a rhetorical fancy, albeit Spirit-inspired, and justified by the existence of a shared *res* between Israel and the Church. Dunn de-emphasizes this shared *res*, seeming to understand Paul's approach more as an allegorical reading, in which the Old Testament events are paralleled with the New Testament realities, but do not bear the same intrinsic connection: '*their* concrete experience of (literal, physical) redemption is an allegory of *our* concrete experience of (spiritual) redemption. In the same way, *our* literal, physical immersion and eating of bread and wine are sacraments because they point to our redemption in Christ.'

<sup>110</sup> Beasley-Murray bemoans the 'eisegesis' of those who approach 1 Corinthians 10 in terms of the sacramental theology of Paul, rather than in terms of the 'Old Testament narrative and its contemporary exegesis' arguing that they transform the 'literary clothing of the thought into the thing that matters.'

<sup>111</sup>

In many respects, Davidson's understanding of typology is more in keeping with a pre-critical reading of the text, exemplified in many of the patristics and later medieval commentators.<sup>112</sup> Paul is not seen to be taking liberties with the Old Testament text, even with a Spirit-given license, as the events that the text records are themselves prophetic, and the New Testament reading that Paul offers is rooted in the text's own implications.

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<sup>109</sup> Thiselton 2000, 724

<sup>110</sup> Dunn 1970, 126-127

<sup>111</sup> Beasley-Murray 1972, 182-183

<sup>112</sup> St Hilary, cited in Danielou 1960, 11: 'Christ begets the Church, cleanses it, sanctifies it, calls it, chooses it, redeems it by true authentic prefigurations through the whole course of this world's history.' These events are sacraments, 'reality-filled promises' (to borrow Geoffrey Wainwright's felicitous expression [Wainwright 1971, 73]) of God's definitive future redemption.

## 7. Conclusion

Having surveyed a selection of interpretative approaches to 1 Corinthians 10:1-13, it should be apparent that making necessary distinctions within the spectrum of figural interpretations is by no means an easy task. In the previous chapter, I highlighted some of the problems with the popular opposition between ‘allegorical’ and ‘typological’ readings. For many, no great difference between typological and allegorical readings exists.<sup>113</sup> A popular understanding of the difference might be seen in the claim that allegorical interpretation is one for which ‘the real meaning of the OT text is something with no continuity with the historical intention of its writer.’<sup>114</sup> In contrast, typology is supposed to depend upon a real connection and ‘narrative coherence’<sup>115</sup> between typical events and persons. I have already articulated some of the problems with such distinctions in the previous chapter.

Some salient criteria according to which we could begin to distinguish different typological readings have emerged in the course of this chapter, however. The first of these furthers the distinction between *allegoria facti* and *allegoria verbi* mentioned in the previous chapter. In Hays’ treatment of the typology of 1 Corinthians 10, he argues in terms of a robust *allegoria facti* for the relation between Israel and the Church, yet treats most of the specific details of the chapter more as *allegoria verbi*, with little ‘assertorial weight’, serving principally as imaginative expansions of the fundamental relation.<sup>116</sup> Appreciating the degree to which readings of particular typological correlations fall within one or the other category is one criterion by which we can start to distinguish positions.

The second criterion relates to the manner in which the weight of typological correlations is distributed between their two poles. A well-weighted Old Testament pole, such as that within the *devoir-être* typology of Davidson will produce a different understanding of typological relations from such as Hays, for whom the New Testament pole is heavily weighted and the Old Testament pole

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<sup>113</sup> James Barr is one who attacks the distinction between typology and allegory, and maintains that it is inappropriate for us to try to replicate the exegesis of the apostolic texts in this regard (Topping 2007, 83ff.). See also Daniel Treier’s treatment of typology and its relationship to allegory in Bartholemew, Treier, & Wright 2005, 823-827.

<sup>114</sup> Brian McNeil cited in Xun 2010, 125.

<sup>115</sup> Bartholemew, Treier, & Wright 2005, 825

<sup>116</sup> Hays 1989, 91

considerably less so. In the former case, there will be much greater bi-directionality of interpretative movement within the correlation. There will also tend to be a greater consideration of the literal sense of the Old Testament text in treating its New Testament correlate.

The third criterion relates to the relative prominence of and perceived relationship between horizontal and vertical axes of typology and the escalating and elevating aspects of typology. This chapter's exploration of Hebrews provided a number of examples of pronounced vertical typology (that were nonetheless inextricably connected to horizontal typology).

The fourth criterion concerns the strength and reality of the perceived ontological connection between Israel and the Church. Where such a relationship is robust, it can serve as a foundation for other typological elements and ascribe to the Old Testament a greater formative weight than it might otherwise be granted.

The fifth criterion concerns the actuality and extent of the activity and self-donation of the pre-existent Christ within the Old Testament. Where this is emphasized, Old and New Testaments will be perceived as sharing the same fundamental *res*.

Finally, one further criterion might concern the perceived character of biblical events, as this was discussed in the previous chapter. Figural readings that focus upon events as they lie behind the text will tend to follow different principles from those that focus upon the scriptural witness to them.

Within this chapter, I have shown in considerable detail that the Exodus provides a fundamental model, paradigm, and reservoir of symbolism for the New Testament's presentation of the salvation in Christ. My later discussion of the Red Sea crossing motif in particular derives much of its strength from this. The Exodus event is also foundational within the ambit of the Old Testament, something I will demonstrate in more detail in the chapter that follows. Paul seems to have interpreted the experience of New Testament Christians to be intrinsic to the same symbolic and narratable world with its attendant typology. Consequently, he appeals to the same archetypes and foundational narrative as Israel does for the interpretation of the Church's experience. It is to the Exodus pattern in the Old Testament and the canonical development of the motif of the Red Sea crossing that we will turn in the chapter that follows.



# 4

## THE HORSE AND ITS RIDER

### The Development of Red Sea Crossing Typology in Scripture

The crossing of the Red Sea is an event with peculiar typological fecundity. Within the context of the Old Testament it is recounted and alluded to, its themes revisited, and its typological significance maximalized in many subsequent canonical reflections.<sup>1</sup> This chapter will demonstrate the significance and the profile of the Red Sea crossing within the biblical canon, while exploring some of the themes that are connected with it.

#### *1. The Exodus Pattern*

It is from the larger pattern within which it is originally situated that much of the canonical importance of the Red Sea crossing derives. As one of its elements, an allusion to the Red Sea crossing can evoke the entire movement and meaning, on account of the synecdochal relation that pertains between the larger cycle and its constitutive elements. While it is not the first occurrence of the pattern within the Pentateuch, the account of the Exodus is its paradigmatic presentation, and serves as the datum from which most of its symbolism and meaning is established. Given the prominent profile of the Red Sea crossing account within this larger cycle, allusions to it can serve as a primary marker of

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. Nehemiah 9:9-11; Psalm 74:13-15; 77:16-20; 89:9-10; 106:9-11; Isaiah 11:15-16; 51:9-16; 63:11-13.

exodus patterns elsewhere in Scripture. Were baptism to find sturdy typological roots in the Red Sea crossing, its performance would serve to evoke the broader meaning, symbolism, and narrative of the Exodus and place the baptismal candidate in relation to it.

The exodus pattern occurs in dozens of iterations in various scriptural passages. Appearing in many configurations, and with varying and developing import, on occasions its deployment takes the form of a prominent recapitulation of the pattern, on others a subtle echoing of it, and on yet others an inversion, distortion, or parody of it.<sup>2</sup> Uses of the pattern are frequently partial, hinting at the larger movement that it represents through inclusion of a few of its elements.<sup>3</sup> The presence of the pattern is known through the family resemblances between narratives—family resemblances that connect the narratives despite the fact that no single narrative possesses them all.

David Daube argues that while other scriptural narratives exhibit the borrowing of various elements, the Exodus narrative stands out among them as the one whole story ‘into the framework of which new events are forced.’<sup>4</sup> Although a case might conceivably be presented for the creation narratives occasionally playing such a role, Daube’s claim is not easily gainsaid. The prominence and fascination that the Exodus narrative holds within the scriptural

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<sup>2</sup> One such instance can be found in the story of Lot’s deliverance from Sodom in Genesis 19, which contains a number of classic exodus motifs and themes. Having delivered the promise of a son to Abraham and Sarah, the angels proceed to judge the city of Sodom. There is a threat to life at the doorway, and the doorway becomes a site of angelic protection and judgment upon those outside, while the house is marked out as a site of refuge (Genesis 19:9-11; cf. Exodus 12). There is the pressing call to leave the city in a hurry, with all relatives and possessions (Genesis 19:13; cf. Exodus 12:31-39). The notion that the ‘outcry’ against a city or the voice of the oppressed has reached the ear of YHWH, leading to a descent to judge is another feature of Lot’s exodus pattern (Genesis 18:20-21, 19:13; cf. Exodus 3:7-8). An evening meal with unleavened bread is eaten (Genesis 19:3; cf. Exodus 12). The angels seize the hands of Lot and his family to get them to escape (Genesis 19:16; cf. Jeremiah 31:32). Lot is instructed to flee, literally, to ‘the mountain’ (Genesis 19:17; cf. Exodus 3:12). Judgment occurs at the coming of morning (Genesis 19:23-24; cf. Exodus 14:27). A witnessing pillar/heap is established (as God judges Lot’s wife by turning her into a pillar of salt—Genesis 19:26; cf. Exodus 14:19-20).

Lot’s exodus, however, is in many respects a twisted and failed exodus. Lot’s story is supposed to contrast with the exodus story of Abraham that surrounds it on both sides (much as Judah’s story will later function in relation to Joseph’s). For instance, Lot’s wife is made as sterile as salt, whereas the barren Sarah is made fruitful. Lot ends up losing his possessions, is reduced to living in a cave (which are associated with death elsewhere in Genesis, e.g. Genesis 23), and fathers two cursed nations through incestuous union with his daughters (Genesis 19:30-38). Abraham, by contrast, grows richer, gains greater power and influence, and becomes the father of the blessed Isaac.

<sup>3</sup> See Daube 1963 for extensive treatment of the use of the Exodus pattern in Scripture. Jordan 1988, 182-187.

<sup>4</sup> Daube 1963, 12

imagination is profound. Daube proceeds to assert that the Exodus is not an arbitrary and accidental historical event, but derives its ‘eternal validity’ from established social patterns of justice:<sup>5</sup>

The kind of salvation portrayed in the exodus was not, by its nature, an isolated occurrence, giving rise to nebulous hopes for similar good luck in the future: it had its root in, and set the seal on, a permanent institution – hence it was something on which absolute reliance might be placed.... By being fashioned on the exodus, later deliverances became manifestations of this eternal, certainty-giving relationship between God and his people.<sup>6</sup>

## *2. Anticipations of the Exodus*

The shadow of the event of the Exodus is cast both forward and backward in time – ‘even events prior to the exodus were made to approximate the latter, so as to gain still earlier proof of this role of God.’<sup>7</sup> An examination of formal and linguistic connections between the account of Jacob and Laban and the later account of the Exodus from Egypt will provide an illustrative instance of this in operation, and an example of the functioning of the exodus pattern more generally.<sup>8</sup>

A more detailed exodus pattern typically begins with the protagonist leaving his home, generally on account of a threat to his wellbeing. In Jacob’s case, the threat is that of the violent retribution of Esau for the stealing of his blessing (Genesis 27:41-45). In the case of the later Exodus narrative, the removal to Egypt is initially occasioned by another case of fraternal conflict, this time between Joseph and his brothers, and then later by the famine in the land (Genesis 45).

The protagonist experiences a reversal of fortunes, leading to a form of slavery or oppression, yet prospers despite the reversal. After an initially favourable reception from Laban, Jacob finds himself reduced from the status of

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<sup>5</sup> Daube maintains that one of these cultural principles of justice allowed for the redemption of slaves. The Exodus story depicts God as one who demands the fulfillment of these from Pharaoh and punishes him for his non-compliance (Daube 1963, 13-14).

<sup>6</sup> Daube 1963, 14

<sup>7</sup> Daube 1963, 14

<sup>8</sup> See Daube 1963, 62-72 and Jordan 2005a for much which follows.

kinsman to that of a hired worker (Genesis 29:14-15),<sup>9</sup> while Joseph is thrown into prison. Both, however, prosper in their new circumstances, Joseph gaining much power in the prison and eventually rising to power in the kingdom, and Jacob multiplying his offspring and his flocks.

The protagonist becomes exposed to direct hostility and oppression, yet outwits the tyrant with his shrewdness and deception. Laban turns against Jacob (Genesis 31:2-3), as Pharaoh turns against the Israelites (Exodus 1:8-14).<sup>10</sup> Jacob uses his cunning to gain possession of most of the flocks of Laban (Genesis 30:25-31:1), while the Hebrew midwives are blessed for deceiving Pharaoh (Exodus 1:15-22). Both stories recount the fruitless attempts of the tyrant to limit the fertility of the righteous protagonists. The theme of childbearing and the threats to it is a recurring trope within the exodus pattern.<sup>11</sup>

The tyrant or oppressor is plagued, decapitalized, or judged, while the righteous protagonist is preserved and blessed, despoiling those who have mistreated him. Egypt is brought to its knees in the plagues (Exodus 7-12) and the Israelites later plunder them (12:35-36); while Laban consumed the bride price for both Rachel and Leah, with his cunning Jacob despoiled Laban of his flocks and possessions (Genesis 31:1-16), and on their departure Rachel steals the teraphim. In both cases, the judgments come in progressive stages, the duplicitous and unrepentant tyrants trying to escape them, but being hardened, weakened, and impoverished in the process. Egypt suffers ten plagues; Laban changes Jacob's wages ten times in response to the losses that he incurs as a result of God's

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<sup>9</sup> See Daube 1963, 63 for an argument in support of this reading.

<sup>10</sup> The relation of the character of Laban to the story of the Exodus is fascinating, as he seems to undergo something akin to a typological bifurcation. While, as I will go on to demonstrate, he is typologically associated with the character of Pharaoh, he also bears no less clear a typological symmetry to the character of Jethro. Like Jacob, Moses flees to the east from his home and a threat of death (Exodus 2:15; cf. Genesis 27:43-45; 29:1), comes to the aid of women at a well and waters their flock (Exodus 2:16-19; cf. Genesis 29:1-10), marries one of them, has children, and keeps the flock for his father-in-law (Exodus 2:21-22; 3:1), receives a vision where God tells him to leave (Exodus 3:2ff.; cf. Genesis 31:11-13), has a threatening encounter with YHWH on the way (Exodus 4:24-26; cf. Genesis 32:24-32), before being reunited with a brother whom he has not seen for many years who has journeyed to meet him (Exodus 4:27-28; cf. Genesis 33), and returning home with the original threat that occasioned the departure removed (Exodus 2:23; 4:19). Within this abbreviated and lightly sketched exodus pattern, Jethro plays the role of the good father-in-law, who gives his daughter in marriage without trickery or deceit, provides refuge, welcomes his son-in-law as a full member of his family and freely blesses him on his departure (Exodus 4:18), a striking contrast to Laban's dishonourable treatment of Jacob in Genesis.

<sup>11</sup> Another example of this trope's occurrence can be found in Genesis 20:1-21:7.

judgment upon him through them (Genesis 31:7-9, 41). This process typically involves miraculous divine intervention in judgment and blessing.

YHWH declares that he has seen or heard the wickedness and oppression of the tyrant and the suffering of the protagonist,<sup>12</sup> instructing him to leave the place of his bondage and return to his homeland. The Angel of YHWH appears to Moses in the burning bush (Exodus 3:2) and the Angel of God to Jacob in a dream (Genesis 31:11). Both are assured that YHWH has seen their suffering and are called to depart (Genesis 31:11-13; Exodus 3:4-10).<sup>13</sup>

The false gods of the tyrant are humiliated, the tyrant pursues the protagonist, and is warned by YHWH. The gods of Egypt are judged in the plagues (Exodus 12:12; Numbers 33:4), while the teraphim of Laban are ritually defiled by Rachel sitting upon them during her period (Genesis 31:33-35). Pharaoh and Laban pursue the Israelites and Jacob respectively.<sup>14</sup> A witnessing pillar is established between Laban and Jacob (Genesis 31:45-53) and between Israel and Pharaoh's army (Exodus 14:19).

There is a theophanic encounter, divine battle, peril or threat, or deliverance at a water crossing, typically occurring at night. This is the place of the Red Sea crossing within the exodus pattern. In the account of Jacob's escape from Laban, the ford of the Jabbok is the site of the struggle with the theophanic Angel (Genesis 32:22-32; cf. Hosea 12:4). The life-threatening visit of YHWH's Angel at night is reminiscent of the narrative of the Passover, or of the story of Moses in Exodus 4:24-26, another perplexing passage which shares several features with Jacob's wrestling at the ford of Jabbok.<sup>15</sup>

In both cases a decisive transition occurs. Both stories signal this transition with the movement from darkness to dawn. Jacob wrestles with the

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<sup>12</sup> Cassuto 1967, 29

<sup>13</sup> Childs 1974, 53-55 takes a form-critical perspective on Exodus 3:1ff., following Zimmerli and Habel in highlighting the relationships that it bears with later prophetic call narratives. At this point, however, one might observe that the formal similarities between the appearances to Jacob and Moses are no less striking. They both share angelic representation of divine presence (Genesis 31:3, 11-13; Exodus 3:2-4), a similar formula of divine confrontation (Genesis 31:11; Exodus 3:4), involve a divine self-identification through reference to past events (Genesis 31:13; Exodus 3:6), both refer to God's witnessing of oppression (Genesis 31:12; Exodus 3:7, 9), and present a summons to leave and return to the homeland (Genesis 31:13; Exodus 3:10).

<sup>14</sup> Both are warned by YHWH: Pharaoh at various points throughout the account of the plagues and Laban in Genesis 31:24, 29. Pharaoh responds by blaming Moses, Laban by blaming Jacob (Genesis 31:26-30).

<sup>15</sup> The protagonist faces a divine assailant or opponent during a nighttime journey and his leg is touched (Geller 1982, 57-59; Propp 1993, 199-500).

Angel until the break of day, and the sun rises on him as he crosses over (Genesis 32:24-31). The account of the Red Sea crossing manifests this same anticipation of the approaching dawn. The sea is divided during the night (Exodus 14:21). The Egyptians start to be troubled by YHWH in the morning watch (14:24 – הַבֶּקֶר – בַּאֲשֶׁמֶרֶת) and it is at the appearance of the morning (14:27) that the sea returns to its full depth and drowns them.<sup>16</sup> As the event that marks the final and definitive transition, the water crossing acquires a peculiar significance, being uniquely suited to encapsulating the entire movement from bondage to freedom.<sup>17</sup>

### *3. The Red Sea, the Jordan, and the Wilderness*

Exodus patterns proliferate in the Old Testament, especially within the Pentateuch. The forms that they take can vary significantly, as can their chief identifying features. The theme of water-crossing is absent within many of them,<sup>18</sup> while other themes may be more prominent. While a loose formal likeness may exist, there is no single set form, and the connections between them are primarily a matter of family resemblances, literary phenotypes that hint at a shared typological genotype.

Furthermore, while there is a close relation between the two, to bind the significance of the water-crossing too firmly to an exodus pattern would be a mistake. Larger exodus themes may surface in the form of a water-crossing, but this is not always the case, not least on those occasions when entry into the land of promise may be the primary theme.<sup>19</sup> Although the Red Sea crossing and the

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<sup>16</sup> Both the story of Jacob with Laban and the story of Israel in Egypt at the beginning of the book of Exodus are dominated by themes of darkness and events that occur during the night. The sun sets after Jacob arrives at Bethel in Genesis 28:11 and is not described as rising again until 32:31. The intervening period involves visions and dreams of the night (28:12-17; 31:11-13, 24), misrecognition by night (29:23-25), sexual relations by night (e.g. 30:16), a nighttime water crossing (32:22), and a struggle towards dawn with the Angel (32:24). Similar themes occur in the story of Israel. Moses has a threatening nighttime encounter with YHWH (Exodus 4:24-26), God speaks to Moses by night (7:15; 8:20; 9:13), there is a plague of darkness (10:21-23), there is the night vigil of the Passover and the death of the firstborn at midnight (Exodus 11-12), a nighttime water crossing (14:21-22), and a victorious battle at the water crossing that heralds the dawn (14:24-29).

<sup>17</sup> After the water crossing, both Jacob and Israel face the threat of their brother Esau or his descendants (Genesis 33; Exodus 17:8-16). Although it appears elsewhere (e.g. Exodus 4:27-28), it is not clear whether the encounter or reunion with the alienated or long unseen brother belongs to a form of the exodus pattern.

<sup>18</sup> Genesis 12:10-20; 19:1-38; and 1 Samuel 5-6 are three examples where this element is missing.

<sup>19</sup> On yet other occasions, as I shall later demonstrate, themes of creation through and out of water may be more prominent than exodus themes.

later crossing of the Jordan under Joshua share similar features and are closely related, the crossing of the Jordan does not belong to the earlier exodus pattern, but serves as its counterpart.

The crossing of the Jordan marks Joshua out as Moses's true successor (Joshua 4:14).<sup>20</sup> Joshua is a leader like Moses, a fact from which his leadership derives much of its legitimacy.<sup>21</sup>

The similarity of the two events also designates the entry into the land as the continuation and fulfilment of the salvation begun with the deliverance from Egypt.<sup>22</sup> Together the two events serve as bookends of the wilderness experience. James Nohrnberg writes:

The wilderness period itself is an expanded threshold between two spaces, a threshold that has widened to become itself a space, with two thresholds of its own. These are the thresholds marked by one generation's going out (out to the wilderness), and another generation's going in (out of the wilderness into the promised land). The momentum across such a threshold space might constitute a single momentum, as the parallelism of Psalm 106:9 allows: "He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness." This condenses the buffer space into an abridgment of chaos. Instead, the narrative offers various objections to such an advance, whether these are generated by considerations of military strategy, or by hesitations upon the threshold which are punished by wandering or abiding there. In some way Israel was qualified for the promised land by the wilderness, either penally, or through probation and trial, or by preliminary service to God.<sup>23</sup>

The description of the initial entry into the land exists in a sort of chiasmic relationship with the original Exodus account, the antiphon of its themes on the other side of the liminal realm of the wilderness. The Jordan crossing completes the movement begun by the Red Sea crossing. The manna provided after the Red Sea crossing (Exodus 16) ceases when they first eat of the fruits of the land (Joshua 5:12). The memorial stones of Joshua 4 may correspond to the pillar of

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<sup>20</sup> Leithart 2000, 108. A 'membering' of Moses's authority might also be a theme in Joshua 3, as the officers and the priests play a key role: the miracle is not accomplished in the same manner as the Red Sea crossing, through the solitary figure of the rod-bearing Moses. Such a theme would continue from such Pentateuchal passages as Exodus 18 and Numbers 11, where Moses's leadership is delegated and his spirit is given to other leaders of the people.

<sup>21</sup> For a closer discussion of this, see Nohrnberg 1995, 148-149.

<sup>22</sup> Leithart 2000, 108: "Israel left Egypt by passing through the Red Sea, and here they enter the land by passing through the Jordan. In a sense, these are different parts of the same "crossing." The Exodus from Egypt is not really finished until Israel enters the land."

<sup>23</sup> Nohrnberg 1995, 150

cloud and fire placed between the Israelites and the Egyptians. In Joshua 5 the Israelites are circumcised and celebrate the Passover, as in Exodus 12.<sup>24</sup> Finally, in Joshua 5:13-15, Joshua meets the Commander of the army of YHWH and has to remove the sandals from his feet, corresponding to Moses's first encounter with the Angel of YHWH in Exodus 3:2-5.

In such a manner the two accounts are bound together. While Joshua, the Jordan crossing, and the conquest are not forced directly into the mould of the exodus pattern, they are rendered congruent to it, as reiterations and continuations of its themes.<sup>25</sup> The two can also be conflated in certain contexts, as inseparable stages of a single unified movement.<sup>26</sup>

The narrative cycle or tradition to which the Red Sea crossing must be assigned is also a matter of some dispute. Brevard Childs has an informative and insightful treatment of the scholarly discussion that has surrounded the relationship between the Red Sea crossing and the various traditions (the exodus traditions or the wilderness traditions) or the literary sources represented in the book of Exodus and the treatments elsewhere in the Old Testament.<sup>27</sup> He concludes:

Again, it seems highly probable that the language of the Reed Sea was influenced by the Jordan tradition of the river's crossing which introduced the language of a path through the sea and the river's stoppage. Thus the exodus as the 'going out of Egypt' and the conquest as the 'coming into the land' were joined in a cultic celebration of Israel's deliverance and transmitted together. This complex of tradition exerted a definite force toward pulling the Reed Sea event away from its original prose setting in the wilderness tradition and attracting it within the cycle of the exodus.

Finally, the new role which the passover assumed within Israel's cult in the post-exilic period affected strongly the shape of the sea

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<sup>24</sup> The circumcision of the uncircumcised generation on arrival in the land also recalls the circumcision of Gershom in Exodus 4:24-26.

<sup>25</sup> There is, however, a miniature 'wilderness' experience prior to the Red Sea crossing, involving complaining and unbelief on the part of the Israelites (Exodus 14:11-14). Nohrberg (Nornberg 1995, 150) writes: "The narrative anticipates this development [the tarrying in the wilderness] at the outset, for it shows us a miniature expansion of the wilderness tradition upon its very threshold—and therefore a doubling of the threshold—through Moses' doubling back and camping along the Egyptian side of the Reed Sea, in its "wilderness" (Exod. 13:18). Moses' delay upon this threshold is divinely inspired, and seems to anticipate a future dilation of the wilderness texts and narratives."

<sup>26</sup> Psalm 74:13-15 puts the two events (and the water from the rock) directly alongside each other. Psalm 114 and Isaiah 63:11-14 might be further instances of such a conflation.

<sup>27</sup> Childs 1974, 221-224



tradition (cf. ch.12). The passover became the major cultic vehicle for commemorating the deliverance which had begun with the plagues. The sea event therefore became the heart of the exodus story which was annually rehearsed in the passover ritual. By the end of the Old Testament period the Reed Sea event had been thoroughly identified with the departure from Egypt rather than marking the beginning of the wilderness wanderings.<sup>28</sup>

As a threshold, the crossing of the Red Sea represents both a departure and an entry. It is the seam between the two narrative cycles – that of the Exodus and that of the wilderness wanderings – and can justifiably be connected with either. There is a measure of truth to Childs' claim that the Red Sea is identified with the departure from Egypt, rather than with the beginning of the wilderness wanderings. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that on at least two of the most prominent occurrences of Red Sea crossing imagery in the New Testament, it is presented as possessing a chiefly prospective rather than retrospective significance, as the start of a new chapter rather than the closing of an old one. The baptism of Jesus in Matthew 3:13-17 plays the role of the Red Sea crossing in the Exodus narrative. However, rather than being placed in relation to a prior exodus, it is placed in relation to the forty days and the testing in the wilderness that follow it (4:1-11), which lead up to the 'conquest of the land' in Jesus's public ministry. Likewise, in 1 Corinthians 10:1-13, the 'baptism' of the Red Sea is entirely related to the wilderness narratives, rather than to the Exodus narratives that precede them. The neglected prospective dimension of the Red Sea crossing, especially in its relationship to baptism, is a subject to which we will return at various points in this thesis.

#### ***4. Archetypes***

##### **4.1 Corporate Personality**

A noteworthy feature of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus is the manner in which prominent stories of the patriarchs are made to take the form of exoduses. Abraham experiences an exodus from Egypt in Genesis 12:10-13:18,<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Childs 1974, 223-224

<sup>29</sup> Some of the shared features: a) descent to Egypt to escape from famine; b) threat to the woman (as the female infants would have been raised for the Egyptians); c) deception of Pharaoh (by Abram and Sarai, like the Hebrew midwives later); d) captivity, as Sarai is taken to Pharaoh's

and a further exodus in Genesis 20<sup>30</sup>—both events which manifest many formal similarities to that of the later Exodus narrative. These two accounts mark critical junctures in the overarching Abraham narrative: the first near the very beginning of the narrative and the second immediately before the birth of Isaac, arguably serving as the precondition for it, as the opening of Sarah’s womb occurs at the same time as the opening of the wombs of the household of Abimelech.<sup>31</sup> I have already discussed the resemblances between the narrative of Jacob’s sojourn with Laban and the Exodus narrative.

Perhaps the most significant proleptic exoduses are those within the life of Moses. There are two of these. I have already described, compared, and contrasted one of these with the narrative of Jacob. Moses’s exile and return from the land of Midian bears close comparison to the story of Jacob’s time with Laban, but is a benign exodus, a return from a foreign land without bondage, in contrast to the great Exodus that follows it.

The first example, is especially noteworthy in relation to our present subject matter.<sup>32</sup> In Exodus 2:1-10, the infant Moses’s life is threatened. He is placed in an ark and rescued through the water.<sup>33</sup> Moses is taken out from the

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house; e) prospering and multiplying in a foreign land; f) plagues on Pharaoh; g) warning of the Pharaoh and blaming of the prophet; h) leaving the country with great riches; i) inheriting the land of Caanan.

<sup>30</sup> In this case the shared features may be as follows: a) journey into a foreign land under another king; b) a threat to the woman, being taken for the harem; c) divine warning to the king and blaming of the prophet; e) a plague or curse upon the foreign nation (the closing of the wombs of Abimelech’s house—v.18); f) the giving of great gifts; g) the theme of the opening of the womb (of the women of the house of Abimelech and of Sarah, in the passage that immediately follows), which corresponds to the focus on the theme of the firstborn in the Exodus narrative.

<sup>31</sup> Wenham 1994, 75-76 regards the opening of the wombs of Abimelech’s household as a promising sign of a change of Sarah’s barren condition. However, the appearance of this account in such close proximity to that of the opening of Sarah’s womb suggests to me that a closer relationship between the two events is to be recognized. I will later suggest a greater significance to the theme of the opened womb.

<sup>32</sup> The relevant connections will become more apparent when refracted through the lens of later scriptural reflection, such as that within Isaiah 63:11.

<sup>33</sup> Sadgrove 2012, 101. Cassuto 1967, 18-19: “The word *ark* ... occurs in only two sections of the Bible: here and in the section of the Flood. This is certainly not a mere coincidence. By this verbal parallelism Scripture apparently intends to draw attention to the thematic analogy. In both instances one worthy of being saved and destined to bring salvation to others is to be rescued from death by drowning. In the earlier section the salvation of humanity is involved, here it is the salvation of the chosen people; in the former passage, Scripture tells of the deliverance of the macrocosm, in the latter it speaks of the deliverance of the microcosm.”

The Flood, like the water deliverances in Exodus, follows after the multiplication of men on the earth (Genesis 6:1; Exodus 1:7). Both Moses and Noah are figures who are to deliver their people into rest (cf. Genesis 5:29). The Flood, like the Exodus, involves a passage through the waters to the mountain, where a new covenant is made.

reeds (v.5 – סוף), just as Israel will later be delivered from the Sea of Reeds (13:18 – ים-סוף). Just as in the case of Jacob, the water-crossing or deliverance is associated with a naming event (Genesis 32:27-28; Exodus 2:10), providing the foundation for a new identity. As it is of a piece with the birth narrative, the deliverance of Moses through the water probably has a principally prospective impulse.

The story of Moses's life, sojourn in Midian, and later ministry is not merely a benign version of the initial exodus cycle, but also of the subsequent wilderness cycle. Nohrnberg highlights some of the relevant parallels here:<sup>34</sup>

1. Moses is in Egypt and seeks to intervene on behalf of his people; in his second 'visitation' Moses intervenes with Pharaoh for the Israelites.
2. Moses flees Egypt as a fugitive; Israel leave Egypt in haste after the Passover.<sup>35</sup>
3. Moses is a stranger in a foreign land (2:22); Israel wander in the wilderness.
4. YHWH appears to Moses at Mount Horeb; YHWH appears to the whole nation at Mount Horeb (cf. 3:12).<sup>36</sup>
5. Moses departs from Jethro (4:18); Jethro departs from Moses and Israel (18:27).
6. Moses returns to rejoin Israel and intervene with Pharaoh on their behalf; Israel leaves Sinai for the land of Israel after Moses intervenes with God for them after their sin.
7. Pharaoh and Egypt are plagued by God and the Egyptian firstborn killed; Israel is plagued by God and the Egyptian-born older generation dies out in the wilderness.
8. Moses and Israel enter the wilderness and then cross the Red Sea; Israel leave the wilderness and cross the Jordan.

Through all of these proleptic exoduses a relationship is forged between the members of the people and their leaders or ancestors. Precapitulating the destiny of the entire people, the ancestor or leader enables the people to live out

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There are also parallels with the life of Joseph to be found in the life of Moses. Both follow a 'double visitation' pattern, highlighted in Stephen's speech in Acts 7 (Johnson 1992, 121-122). Both are loved children who are cruelly separated from their parents but rise to high status relative to the Egyptian royalty. Both go out seeking their brethren (Genesis 37:12-17; Exodus 2:11) and are rejected by them.

<sup>34</sup> Nohrnberg 1995, 146-147. A comparison of Acts 7:23 and Exodus 7:7 highlights the tradition that Moses was forty years of age when he first sought to help his people and that he spent forty years in Midian, like Israel's forty years in the wilderness, suggesting that the congruence of Moses's personal story and that of Israel was noticed and highlighted from early on.

<sup>35</sup> Perhaps we should see a relationship between the story of the conflict with the shepherds at the water in 2:16-19 and Moses's protection of Israel, YHWH's bride-to-be, from the violence of Pharaoh at the Red Sea.

<sup>36</sup> Leithart 2000, 77

of their identity. The life of the ancestor is the paradigm for the history of those that descend from them. In this manner typological connections are identity-forging bonds, establishing an organic and dynamic relation between head and body, patriarch and seed, leader and people. Nohnberg writes again:

It was in the mountain that it was revealed to Moses that he was to return to Israel in Egypt, and that this Israel would return to the mountain and to the territorial Israel. This pattern is one more of the blueprints that God shows Moses in the mountain. Moses shares the life *of* his people, and so shares his life *with* them. His life is thus converted to Israel's while its life is converted to his. He preparticipates in the life of his people in Egypt and Midian, then repossesses that life through the stories in Exodus.<sup>37</sup>

Figures such as Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses serve as sources and guarantors of Israel's life, identity, vocation, and destiny and the typological bonds between their narratives and those of the larger nation are the channels and testaments of this life and vocation and the nation's title to them. This will prove an important theme as we study the relevance and significance of the connection between baptism and the Red Sea crossing. As exodus – and most particularly a salvation through water – lies at the root of the identity of the nation and its ancestors, an evocation of this event and of the water salvation within it can be powerfully identity-forging in the present.

## 4.2 Archetypal Events

This identity is not drawn solely from a corporate person such as Moses, nor solely from the archetypal salvation events that they were brought through. Rather, it is an identity forged through participation in a particular and personal history that definitively realizes the salvific typological pattern. This foundational, root history is differentially conjugated in the lives of all who follow from it, its patterns principally communicated by means of liturgy.

As Louis-Marie Chauvet claims, the accounts of the Pentateuch serve as 'meta-historical archetypes of Israel's identity'.<sup>38</sup> The Red Sea crossing narrative is immediately followed by the Song of the Sea, in which the event is

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<sup>37</sup> Nohnberg 1995, 147

<sup>38</sup> 'The original proto-history becomes thereby origin-giving meta-history, that is to say, always contemporary.' Chauvet 1995, 203.

memorialized. The Song of the Sea contains *in nuce* much of the larger early history of Israel, presenting the Red Sea crossing as an anchoring point for the broader sweep of the surrounding narrative and for the identity of Israel more generally.<sup>39</sup> Brian Russell and others have argued that this song should be regarded as Israel's 'national anthem', a 'foundational piece of literature' that was drawn upon by later tradents for the description of events within their own time.<sup>40</sup> The Song of the Sea frames the crossing as a battle, in which the warrior God gains victory over the foes of Israel.<sup>41</sup> The Song also introduces the canonical motif of YHWH as the divine king, where earlier texts focus primarily upon YHWH as guide and provider.<sup>42</sup> The continuing presence of the Red Sea crossing event in the regular prayer and worship of Israel is evidenced in many of the psalms.<sup>43</sup>

Brevard Childs observes the effect of the literary device that juxtaposes the original events with their continuing celebration, 'The original events are not robbed of their historical particularity; nevertheless, the means for their actualization for future Israel is offered in the shape of scripture itself.'<sup>44</sup> The fact that the Red Sea crossing is immediately presented to us in the form of a liturgical memorialization testifies not merely to its foundational character, but also that 'the authentic form of departure for the story is the celebrating assembly in its present reality.'<sup>45</sup> As the Song is a liturgical retelling of the Red Sea crossing event, the text never ceases to be a contemporary of its readers and performers, rather than just a witness to a past history.

The presence of the Red Sea crossing in the life and liturgy of Israel is further manifested within the rituals of the temple, where the laver became associated with the Red Sea.<sup>46</sup> The possibility of a sacrificial pattern to the Red

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<sup>39</sup> Chauvet 1995, 203; VanGemeren 1997, 4:1239-1240

<sup>40</sup> Russell 2007, 147, 150

<sup>41</sup> Brueggemann 1997, 242

<sup>42</sup> Goldingay 2003, 331

<sup>43</sup> Psalm 66:5-6; 77:16-20; 78:13-14; 89:9-10; 106:9-11, 21-22; 114:1-8; 136:13-15; Habakkuk 3:7-8.

<sup>44</sup> Childs 1979, 176

<sup>45</sup> Chauvet 1995, 192-193

<sup>46</sup> Torrance 1958, 167; Neusner & Avery-Peck 2003, 29. Thomas Torrance claims that proselyte baptism also involved 'a powerful theology of participation in the Exodus redemption out of Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea, and of sanctificatory cleansing in the establishment of the Covenant at Mount Sinai.' Torrance 1958, 161. '[T]he purpose of this initiation was to bring the proselyte through the same stages that the people of Israel had passed through at the time of the Exodus from Egypt. Even Jewish baptism then was an imitation of the crossing of the Red Sea and

Sea crossing is one worth exploring, especially as such a pattern can be seen in closely related events. Peter Leithart writes of 2 Kings 2:

The story of Elijah's departure into heaven follows the sequence of a sacrificial rite (Lev. 1). By their mutual journey around the land, Elijah and Elisha form a unit, a "two of them" (2 Kgs. 2:7). They cross the Jordan, as parts of a sacrificial animal will be washed before being placed on the altar. Fire descends from heaven, dividing them in two, one ascending in fire to God, as the altar portions of the animal ascend in smoke to heaven. In the ascension (or "wholly burnt") offering, the skin of the sacrificial animal is given to the priest, and the mantle-skin of Elijah, the hairy garment of the "baal of hair," is left for Elisha. Through this human "sacrifice," Elisha becomes a successor to Elijah, and a new phase of prophetic history begins. In this sense too the story is a type of the sacrifice of Jesus, who is washed in the Jordan, gives himself over to be cut in two, ascends into a cloud, and leaves his Spirit and his mantle with his disciples.<sup>47</sup>

A connection between sacrificial movements and redemptive historical events may perhaps be seen in the *Aqedah* (as God redeems Isaac for himself through sacrifice), the blessing of Jacob in the place of Esau in Genesis 27 (following the two goats pattern of the Day of Coverings sacrifice),<sup>48</sup> and Jacob's crossing of the Jabbok.<sup>49</sup> I would suggest that the Passover is another such example. It is through the sacrificial movement of the Passover that God claims all of the firstborn of Israel – and Israel as a whole as his firstborn (Exodus 4:22) – for himself (Numbers 3:13; 8:17). Blood is sprinkled at Passover (the first recorded blood rite in the Pentateuch). The Israelites then cross the Red Sea, symbolically having their feet and entrails washed (cf. Leviticus 1:9), the 'head' (Moses) already having been exposed to the fire on the altar (Sinai). They are led up by the pillar of cloud and fire to the altar of Sinai, upon which the whole nation is presented as a sacrifice to God.

A connection between the memorialization of the Red Sea crossing and the Feast of First fruits – and a further possible connection with the landing of the

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the baptism of the desert (Ex. 14:30).' Danielou 1960, 176. Note the cautions of Davidson 1981, 213-214 and Lundberg 1942, 138 regarding such a connection, though.

<sup>47</sup> Leithart 2006a, 176

<sup>48</sup> The 'father' must be propitiated by sweet-smelling food, lest he deliver a curse. See also Genesis 37:31 as another example of sonship and deception of a father by means of a goat.

<sup>49</sup> The company is divided, the 'head' is separated from the rest of the body, and a certain part of the body is declared as holy portion of the 'sacrifice' (Genesis 32:32).

Ark in Genesis 8:4<sup>50</sup> – would also give the event a particular status as part of the liturgical calendar of Israel.

Finally, G.K. Beale suggests that

...the best background against which to see Qumran baptism is that of Israel's exodus through the Red Sea and again later through the Jordan under Joshua. It would appear that Qumran understood such baptism to include such baptism to include reference to a new exodus, especially in the light of comparing Isa. 37:25 (referring to the "rivers" of the first exodus) with Isa. 11:15-16; 41:18; 43:2, 19-20; 44:27; 50:2, which all refer to the "river" or "rivers" of a second exodus (though Qumran does not explicitly refer to these Isaiah texts in discussing the water imagery).<sup>51</sup>

## ***5. Later Biblical Treatments***

### **5.1 Movement to New Exodus**

The crossing of the Red Sea is also retold in various later contexts, and these retellings highlight and embellish certain elements of the event's typology, each with its particular inflections. In various psalms the event is related to creation themes, highlighting the motif of the dividing of and the rebuke of the waters (e.g. Psalm 106:9; cf. 104:7), and the bringing of dry land up from the sea (e.g. Psalm 66:6).<sup>52</sup> In the psalms the crossing takes the form of a storm theophany, the implication being that rain came from the pillar cloud.<sup>53</sup> It is a paradigmatic expression of divine power. Such passages may be suggestive of an understanding of the crossing, not merely as echoing themes of the original creation, but as effecting a new one.

This suggestion in the psalms takes a more explicit form in Isaiah 63:11-14, where several creation themes surface in the prophetic recounting of the event – bringing the people up out of the sea (v.11), the presence of the Spirit (v.11), giving breath (רוּחַ) to the new creation (v.11), the division of the waters (v.12), the

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<sup>50</sup> Depending on the calendar that is presumed to be employed (cf. Exodus 12:2).

<sup>51</sup> Beale 2011, 814n34

<sup>52</sup> Such a reading could also find support in the Song of the Sea's reference to 'a people you created' (15:16). See Enns 1997, 70-72 for further discussion of this. Beale 2011, 413n69 also claims that we should observe a narratorial intention to create a connection between Exodus 15:8, Genesis 1:2 (the Spirit's hovering over the primeval waters) and Genesis 8:1.

<sup>53</sup> VanGemeren 1997, 3:1151; Oropeza 2000, 94

deep (תְּהוֹם – v.13), and rest (נוֹחַ – v.14).<sup>54</sup> In Isaiah 63, the Red Sea crossing seemingly stands for the entirety of the redemption from Egypt, summing up the entire movement. In such places we see the profile of the crossing exceeding that of a single element of a larger cycle to become the encapsulating event of the entire Exodus.

The Red Sea crossing is also recounted as God's victory over the sea monster (Psalm 74:13-15; 89:9-10; Isaiah 51:9-10), framing the event in terms redolent of various Ancient Near Eastern creation myths.<sup>55</sup> Psalm 114 speaks of the Red Sea crossing and the crossing of the Jordan under Joshua in the same breath. Ezekiel 16 alludes to the Red Sea crossing within a lengthy nuptial analogy (verse 9).<sup>56</sup>

Within the prophets we find the imagery of the crossing being used as an assurance of the divine power that will accomplish future deliverance (Isaiah 44:24-28), and the reality of YHWH's concern for Israel (Isaiah 43:1-3).<sup>57</sup> The crossing becomes a basis for appeal for divine intervention (Isaiah 63:11-14), and promised future deliverance is described in terms of it (Isaiah 11:15-16; Zechariah 10:10-11). In Isaiah 12, the Song of the Sea is evoked as something that will be sung in response to a promised deliverance. In such a manner the foundational event of the Red Sea crossing does not merely represent a past event that is memorialized, but a ground for Israel's hope, a promise yet to be fully realized.<sup>58</sup> Danielou writes:

The New Exodus has all the features of the old.... But it is not a case of simple repetition. The "new wonders" will cause "the things of old" to be forgotten. The Jews started from Egypt in haste and in flight (Ex. 12:39); the new Exodus will not be "as making haste by flight" (Is. 52:12) but a triumphal march.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> The Isaianic imagery would seem to be reflected at various points in Wisdom 19:6-9 (Enns 1997, 119, 131-134).

<sup>55</sup> VanGemeren 1997, 2:464, 4:548

<sup>56</sup> Torrance 1958, 158ff. See Danielou's comments on Hosea 2:14-15 (Danielou 1960, 154). Similar imagery may be used in relation to baptism in Ephesians 5:25-27.

<sup>57</sup> '[F]ar from being distinct categories, prophecy is the typological interpretation of history.' Danielou 1960, 157

<sup>58</sup> 'The old Testament is both a memory and a prophecy. We can go further, and say that it is the prophecy which makes it a memory: the mighty works of the past are recalled only as the foundation of future hope.' Danielou 1960, 154.

<sup>59</sup> Danielou 1960, 156



In addition to the continuing presence of the Red Sea crossing event in Israel's prayer, worship, and expectation, its themes and motifs also appear at various points in subsequent narratives.<sup>60</sup> The crossing of the Jordan in Joshua hearkens back to this event, as does the crossing of the Jordan in 2 Kings 2, prior to Elijah's ascension.

As already noted, later Jewish tradition developed the meaning of the Red Sea crossing in various further ways.<sup>61</sup> The relationship between the crossing and other biblical events was elaborated upon.<sup>62</sup> Perhaps even more interesting for our purposes is the manner in which themes that are not explicit in the original narrative or its later canonical retellings are drawn out in the subsequent tradition. One of the more intriguing of these motifs is that of national birth, through the

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<sup>60</sup> There are faint hints of a more intense employment of the imagery of the Red Sea crossing in various places. For instance, a surprising number of the biblical references to chariots occur in the context of water deliverances, judgments, or washings, and closer inspection may reveal a more developed typology. In keeping with the Exodus imagery that one finds in the Elijah and Elisha narrative, the alignment of Ahab with Pharaoh may be subtly suggested as Ahab is pursued on his chariot by the winds, black clouds, and heavy rain that ends the drought, while Elijah runs ahead of him by the power of YHWH to Jezreel (1 Kings 18:44-46), and also when, in 1 Kings 22:31-38, the dead Ahab's chariot ends up being washed in a pool, his blood licked up by the dogs. In 2 Kings 5:9-10 the Syrian official, Naaman, comes to Elisha on a chariot, and is immediately sent to wash himself in the Jordan. The chariot symbolism that becomes associated with water becomes more expansive, as divine chariots—and YHWH's throne chariot—are included in the picture. In 1 Kings 7:23ff. we see ten 'water chariots' (cf. v.33) leading from the Bronze Sea in Solomon's temple. In 2 Kings 2, directly after miraculously crossing the Jordan in a manner reminiscent of the Red Sea crossing, Elijah is caught up by a chariot of fire. Various psalms speak of the winds and cloud as the chariot of YHWH (2 Samuel 22:8-12; Psalm 104:3-4), from which he battles against the sea, in ways reminiscent of or alluding to the Exodus account (Habakkuk 3:8-15; 2 Samuel 22:14-17). The association of the cloud and wind with the chariot of YHWH would naturally have shaped the reading of the east wind and the cloud in the Exodus account (cf. Psalm 77:16-20; Habakkuk 3:15; Kline 1999, 15-16). The close association between YHWH's glory presence and the ark of the covenant, and the description of the mercy seat as a 'chariot' (1 Chronicles 28:18), is also suggestive for our reading of the Jordan crossing in Joshua 3, where the ark of the covenant and its bearers play a central role. Such early descriptions would later acquire more explicit form in the *merkabah* vision of Ezekiel 1. Perhaps most intriguing of all is the possibility that such chariot imagery is employed within the New Testament. In Acts 8:26-40 a number of elements of the narrative recall events that we have already mentioned: the running prophet who overtakes the chariot, as Elijah outran Ahab's chariot, the foreign official being instructed to wash, as Elisha instructed Naaman, and the prophet being taken up by the Spirit/throne chariot after coming out of the water (v.39-40; 2 Kings 2:9-11, 16; Ezekiel 3:12-14). Such allusions have differing strengths. These particular allusions are relatively weak, if they are present at all.

<sup>61</sup> For an extensive discussion of the Book of Wisdom's reading of the crossing see Enns 1997, 66-94, 107-34. Wisdom 10:17-18 attributes the crossing of the Red Sea to the activity of Wisdom.

<sup>62</sup> See, for instance, Evans 2004, 221-226 for a discussion of the relationship that Pseudo-Philo creates between the drawing of the infant Moses out from the Nile and the deliverance of Israel at the Red Sea (a relationship already suggested within the canonical text itself, e.g. Isaiah 63:10, cf. Exodus 2:10).

birth canal of the Red Sea.<sup>63</sup> As the event occurs after lengthy references to the firstborn's opening of the womb (Exodus 13:1-2, 11-16), in parallel to the story of the actions of the Hebrew midwives, Moses' birth and water rescue (Exodus 2:1-10), and involves broken waters and emergence through a narrow passage,<sup>64</sup> perhaps the connection is not without a measure of canonical support.<sup>65</sup> As in various other biblical accounts the opening of the womb would mark an exodus or reversal of historical fortunes, and occasion a hymn or prayer of praise.<sup>66</sup> If such a relationship exists, it would provide important biblical background for New Testament themes of Christ's death and resurrection as birth pangs and new birth (e.g. John 16:21; Revelation 12:1-6) and perhaps also for the connection between baptism and new birth (John 3:1-8).

## 5.2 New Testament Use of the Symbolism

<sup>63</sup> Kessler 2009, 34 alerts us to this theme, and to rabbinic interest in the worship of fetuses in the context of the Red Sea deliverance.

<sup>64</sup> For the connection between the waters of the womb and the waters of the sea, see Job 38:8. If the laver (and later the Sea) of the tabernacle and temple are indeed connected with the Red Sea, perhaps it is interesting to observe that in both cases there are suggestive indications that their water is to be thought of as womanly water, the water of birth. The laver of the tabernacle is formed out of the bronze mirrors of the serving women (Exodus 38:8, perhaps in order to represent the 'above' waters of the firmament—Job 37:18), and the description of the raised Bronze Sea of the temple in 2 Chronicles 4:5 uses the feminine form of the word for the lilies that surround it. References to God's recognition of Israel's 'affliction' (עָנִי) in Exodus 3:7, 17 and 4:31 recall the connection between the relief of 'affliction' and childbirth in Genesis 16:11; 29:32; 41:52; and 1 Samuel 1:11. Other words possibly suggestive of the pains of childbirth appear in the exodus context: מִכְאוֹב (3:7); צָעָקָה (3:7, 9); אָנָּה (2:23; cf. Jeremiah 22:23); יָעַק (2:23; Isaiah 26:17); חֵיִל (15:14; Isaiah 26:17). The fact that the promised foods of milk and honey are particularly associated with infancy may not be incidental either (Exodus 3:8, 17; cf. Isaiah 7:15). The biblical association of doors and childbirth should also be noted here (Genesis 18:10; 1 Samuel 1:9; 2 Kings 4:15; 1 Samuel 3:15ff; 1 Kings 14:6-17). The doors of the house represent the doors of the womb, the doorposts representing the legs (cf. Song of Songs 5:15—this might also suggest that the smearing of the blood on the legs in Exodus 4:22-26 should be read in connection with the Passover account). If this connection holds, the placing of the blood on the doorposts bears an intimate symbolic relationship to the plague on Egypt's firstborn (the connection between birth and the coming of the morning could also be elaborated on in this context). The extensive references to the law of the firstborn in the context of the Passover make more sense when we recognize that the bloodied doors are the doors of the womb of the travelling Israel, through which the newborn nation issues forth. The waters are broken and through the narrow passage, God delivers his firstborn son. It might be worthwhile to explore the potential of such a reading of the references to the womb in the Servant Songs and elsewhere in Isaiah (Isaiah 44:2, 24; 46:3; 48:8; 49:1, 5).

<sup>65</sup> One might also point to the prominence of the theme of childbirth and the opening of the womb in connection with the 'exodus' of Abraham in Genesis 20:1-21:7.

<sup>66</sup> See for instance, Genesis 20:1-21:7 (the opening of Sarah's womb coincides with the opening of the wombs of the house of Abimelech and the exodus-type event there), 1 Samuel 1:1-2:11, and Luke 1:39-56, 67-79. The woman struggling to give birth is a common prophetic trope, symbolizing the travails of the nation or world prior to deliverance (e.g. Isaiah 66:7-13; John 16:19-24; Romans 8:18-29; Revelation 12:1-6).

It is on the prophetic tradition of second exodus that the New Testament most frequently draws. Childs observes:

Moreover, it is characteristic of the New Testament to shift the emphasis away from the first exodus to the 'second'. This is to say, the Old Testament exodus tradition has been heard primarily through its eschatological appropriation in Ezekiel and II Isaiah. The hymn of Zechariah speaks of the anticipated redemption with reference to Isa. 60.1, 2 and 59.8. Likewise, John the Baptist's role as herald of the coming salvation is portrayed completely in the eschatological language of II Isaiah (Luke 3.4ff.).<sup>67</sup>

The story of the Red Sea crossing is one of a number of water deliverance stories that is alluded to and evoked at various points within the New Testament literature. Danielou writes:

When the New Testament shows that the life of Christ is the truth and fulfillment of all that was outlined and typified in the Exodus it is only taking up and continuing the typology outlined by the Prophets. The basic difference does not lie in the typology, but in the fact that what is presented by the Prophets as something yet to come is shown by the New Testament writers as fulfilled in Jesus Christ.<sup>68</sup>

The gospel account of Christ's baptism invites comparison with the Red Sea crossing, perhaps especially in Matthew's account, where strong Exodus themes are present at various points in the context (e.g. 2:13-15; 4:1-2).<sup>69</sup> There is the common theme of divine sonship (Exodus 4:22-23; Matthew 3:17; Luke 3:22),<sup>70</sup> passing through waters, being led 'up' into the wilderness by the Spirit, where Christ is tempted and tested as Israel was in the wilderness (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:1-13).<sup>71</sup>

Beale argues for the prominence of second exodus and water crossing themes in the context of the baptism of Christ, 'in fulfilment of the prophecies of Israel's restoration as a second exodus through water (Isa. 11:15; 43:2, 16-17;

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<sup>67</sup> Childs 1974, 233

<sup>68</sup> Danielou 1960, 157

<sup>69</sup> Although, as I observed above, these themes connect the baptism primarily with the later stages of the exodus cycle—the wilderness wanderings followed by the entry into the land.

<sup>70</sup> Such connections would be considerably strengthened by our earlier arguments for Israel's birth through the exodus event.

<sup>71</sup> See Jordan 2005b, 2006a, 2006b; Danielou 1960, 158-159 for extensive discussion of the Mosaic allusions within Matthew's account of Christ's temptations in the wilderness.

44:27-28; 50:2; 51:9-11), especially through rivers (Isa. 11:15; 42:15; 43:2; 44:27; 50:2).<sup>72</sup> Suggesting that the original creation, the Flood account, the Red Sea crossing, the Jordan crossing, and the promises of a future exodus all provide background for the baptism of Christ, Beale maintains that this event marks the initiation of a new exodus and new creation, and Christ's assumption of the vocation of Adam and Israel.

Particularly fascinating is Beale's argument that Matthew 3:16-17 alludes to Isaiah 63:11-15a; 64:1, both of which passages refer to 'God's people going through water with the presence of the Holy Spirit and that Spirit subsequently leading them onto land and into the wilderness at a major redemptive-historical episode.'<sup>73</sup>

Some have also seen a possible allusion to the exodus and the Red Sea in Christ's walking on the water and commanding and rebuking of the waves.<sup>74</sup>

A correspondence between the Red Sea crossing and the death and resurrection of Christ can be suggested. In light of the Exodus and Passover themes that are prominent in the context of the ministry and death of Christ (e.g. Matthew 26:2, 18; Luke 22:15-16, John 13:1; 18:39; 19:14), a connection of the death and resurrection with the victory and deliverance at the Red Sea would not be surprising. Given the presence of a broader exodus pattern, a typological association between the death and resurrection of Christ and the victory and deliverance at the Red Sea would almost have to be inferred in order for the typology to retain its coherence. Without such an event, the exodus themes of victory and escape would be left hanging.<sup>75</sup>

Thomas Torrance argues for the significance of the Church's choice of the less common term *baptisma*, in place of the term *baptismos*: in favouring the former over the latter, they highlighted the objective reality that stands behind every particular baptismal washing.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Beale 2011, 412

<sup>73</sup> Beale 2011, 414

<sup>74</sup> Keener 2003, 673. Christ's rebuking of the waves in Matthew 8:26 may echo God's rebuke of the Red Sea (Psalm 106:9; cf. 104:7). Danielou 1960, 160.

<sup>75</sup> As already observed, the wider New Testament would also provide evidence for a connection between the death and resurrection of Christ and the themes of birth pangs, new birth, and divine sonship.

<sup>76</sup> Torrance 1975, 83ff.

When we regard Christian baptism in this way, not as *baptismos* but as *baptisma*, we find it to be grounded in the whole incarnational event in which the birth of Jesus, his baptism in the Jordan, his vicarious life, as well as his death and resurrection, and the pouring out of his Spirit upon the Church at Pentecost, all have their essential place, and must be kept in focus in our understanding of it.<sup>77</sup>

It is the coming of Jesus Christ through the water of his baptism and the blood of his death (1 John 5:6) that provides the objective condition of possibility for our baptisms.

At various points in the gospels the death of Christ is presented as a water ordeal: his ‘baptism’ in Mark 10:38 and Luke 12:50 is simply his death.<sup>78</sup> Meredith Kline argues that Jesus drew upon Old Testament imagery in conceiving of his sufferings as a water ordeal:

Further background for Jesus’ conceptualizing of his sufferings as a water ordeal (and at the same time an additional antecedent for John’s introduction of a water rite symbolic of judicial ordeal) is found in those supplicatory Psalms in which the righteous servant pleads for deliverance from overwhelming waters. Of particular interest is Psalm 69, from which the New Testament draws so deeply in its explication of the judicial sufferings of Christ: “I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.... Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up” (vv. 2b, 15a; cf. vv. 1, 2a, 14).<sup>79</sup>

The biblical association of the grave with the watery abyss (e.g. Jonah 2:1-6) allowed for a natural application of the language of the water ordeal to the sufferings associated with death and the grave.<sup>80</sup> A further thematic connection between Christ’s death and the water ordeal is the combat theme, one prominent in the book of John. Jesus is, as it were, pursued by the prince of this world (12:31; 14:30; 16:11) and must face him in one great final ordeal by combat, entering into the very maw of the abyss to do so.<sup>81</sup> As I highlighted earlier, within the Old Testament, the Red Sea crossing is a biblical image of the decisive and climactic conflict with and victory over the sea monster, who typifies evil and

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<sup>77</sup> Torrance 1975, 84

<sup>78</sup> Cullmann 1950, 19. See also the use of the sign of Jonah in Matthew 12:39-40.

<sup>79</sup> Kline 1968, 59

<sup>80</sup> Hence the aptness of the imagery of being ‘buried’ with Christ by baptism into death (cf. Romans 6:4).

<sup>81</sup> The theme of combat is earlier associated with baptism through Christ’s immediate movement from baptism to the period of temptation by Satan in the wilderness.

chaos (the big fish that swallows Jonah is another such sea monster, over whom God's mastery is demonstrated as Jonah is vomited out onto dry land):

Synonymous with the motif of the ordeal by water is that of ordeal by combat with sea-monsters. Thus, the Red Sea water ordeal becomes in certain Old Testament passages a conflict of Yahweh against Leviathan (Isa. 51:9, 10; cf. Pss. 74:12-15; 89:10, 11 [9, 10]). We are thereby reminded that the Lord was present with his people in the passage through the sea, that he underwent their ordeal, and that their salvation depended on their identification with him. Then in the New Testament there is a typological application of this imagery to Jesus' conflict with Satan in the course of his humiliation unto death. Hence, on our understanding of John's baptism in general and of his baptism of Jesus in particular, Jesus' experience in the Jordan would have been a symbolic anticipation of his ensuing victorious combat with the Satan-Dragon.<sup>82</sup>

As most of this imagery is not expressly employed within the New Testament (although there are hints of its presence in passages such as Revelation 12), we must be extremely cautious in our employment of it. However, I believe that there is a firm basis upon which to vindicate the later Christian application of such imagery to the death and resurrection of Christ. It also helps to explain some of the logic behind the association of baptism with the death of Christ in the epistles.

Within the epistles, the connection between the Red Sea and baptism suggested in Christ's baptism by John might also be present in the structure of Romans 3-8.<sup>83</sup> A deliverance from slavery through water (Romans 6), leading to a marriage and encounter with the Law, invites the reader to draw parallels with the Red Sea crossing account. N.T. Wright comments:

Typological correspondences between the Exodus of Israel's memory and the New Exodus of Christian proclamation are complex, and should not be pressed for exact one-to-one correspondences. That is not how this sort of thing works. Nonetheless, it may be reasonably claimed that for the evangelists — and arguably for Jesus himself — the equivalent of the crossing of the Red Sea is the death and resurrection of Jesus. The Last Supper is the Passover meal that anticipates, and gives meaning to, the great act of liberation. From that point of view, the wilderness wandering, led by the pillar of cloud and fire, does not occur until the

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<sup>82</sup> Kline 1968, 60. I would suggest that we should regard the dragon or sea-monster as a more extreme form of the figure of the 'serpent', first encountered in Genesis 3.

<sup>83</sup> Wright 1999, 28-29; 2002, 511-512.

post-Easter period — where exactly this theme is picked up, as we will see, by Paul in Romans 8.<sup>84</sup>

In Hebrews 11:29, passing through the Red Sea is presented as something that the Israelites achieved through faith. Later, in 13:20-21, the writer echoes Isaiah 63:11-14 in his parting benediction.<sup>85</sup> He previously argued that Jesus is greater than Moses (Hebrews 3:1-6), and here presents the intriguing possibility of a mutually illuminating typological parallel between Moses and the Red Sea crossing and Christ's resurrection, which would serve to underwrite some of the typological connections suggested above. In keeping with the rest of the epistle, the writer's attention primarily rests upon Christ himself and his ministry, rather than on what it effects for those who belong to him — hence the focus on Christ's resurrection without an explicit articulation of its soteriological consequences — yet that implication is everywhere present.

In Revelation, a book steeped in allusions to the Exodus, there are various possible echoes of the Red Sea crossing.<sup>86</sup> Richard Bauckham argues persuasively for a reference to the Song of the Sea in Revelation 15:2-4,<sup>87</sup> maintaining that 'John writes a new version of the song of Moses in order to provide an interpretation of the deliverance at the Red Sea and its eschatological antitype.'<sup>88</sup> Childs remarks:

There are certain parallel features between Ex. 15 and the hymn which follows. The crystal sea parallels the Red Sea, the elders with harps the victorious Israelites, the conquered beast the defeated Egyptian army.<sup>89</sup>

## **6. Conclusion**

At this point, the Red Sea crossing's importance within the Scripture should be apparent. Its significance is closely related to and reinforced by the broader and ubiquitous exodus pattern. Water crossings can evoke the larger pattern and the presence of the pattern can imply the presence of some sort of crossing. The water crossing serves as the definitive threshold that is crossed,

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<sup>84</sup> Wright 2001

<sup>85</sup> Isaacs 2002, 161

<sup>86</sup> Beale 1999, 633, 785, 787-800; VanGemeren 1997, 4:1240

<sup>87</sup> Bauckham 1993, 296-307

<sup>88</sup> Bauckham 1993, 298

<sup>89</sup> Childs 1974, 234

yielding new identity and status. It is the site of struggle and conflict, and victory over evil. On account of its association with particular archetypal histories and characters, it functions as a source and guarantor of identity, life, and vocation.

Its development as a theme in later Scripture directs attention beyond the original event to the second exodus that is anticipated. Appropriated within the New Testament, this expectation of a new exodus meets a fulfilment in the ministry, death, and resurrection of Christ. Christ's death is his descent into the sea and conflict with the sea monster: his resurrection is the victory that comes with the dawn.



# 5

## AND THE MOST HIGH UTTERED HIS VOICE

### The Word of God in Scripture and Sacrament

#### *1. Taking Our Bearings*

This thesis began in dialogue with Alexander Schmemmann and Jean Daniélou. Both of these theologians have drawn attention to a particular breach that afflicts dogmatic theologies of baptism. Schmemmann highlights the breach that exists between dogmatic theologies of baptism and the actual performance and form of baptism itself. Daniélou concentrates upon the breach between dogmatic theologies of baptism and biblical typology. I framed my thesis as an attempt to address both of these breaches. At certain points, as my argument has wended its way through seemingly unpromising territory, we may appear to have ventured some distance off course from these original bearings. However, we have now attained to a suitable vantage from which we can perceive a favourable path of response to these problems and from which new horizons may disclose themselves to us.

Within the second chapter of this thesis, I presented an extended exploration of typology and figural readings. One of my aims in this endeavour was to demonstrate that the scriptural witness establishes a rich, integrated, and unified ‘world’, a world whose deep meanings are frequently and powerfully mobilized through the deployment of familiar allusions, patterns, and motifs. Kevin Vanhoozer writes:

Typology is the mainspring of theo-dramatic unity, the principle that accounts for the continuity in God's words and acts, the connecting link between the history of Israel and the history of the church, the glue that unifies the Old and New Testaments. To insist on theo-dramatic unity is to affirm what we could call, for lack of a better term, *typological realism*. Typological realism insists that history, like the biblical narrative, finds its coherence in Jesus Christ. History and typology alike display a unity and narrative coherence—not a sameness of equivalence but an *ipse-identity* guaranteed by God's personal constancy to his promises. The presupposition of figural reading is God's consistent action.<sup>1</sup>

The Old Testament assembles what Andrew Louth refers to as a 'matrix, within which the mystery of Christ can be incarnated.'<sup>2</sup> Christ and the Old Testament textual witness stand in reciprocal relation: Christ is the one in whom the Old Testament witness finds its ultimate referent and the one whose identity is made known through that witness. It is only as we maintain these two in their relation that both are disclosed for what they actually are.

In my reflection upon the typology of the baptism and trial narratives of the gospels, I gave this theological claim some exegetical flesh. In the New Testament witness to his baptism and subsequent trials in the wilderness, Jesus takes up a position within the world of the larger scriptural witness. Louth's emphasis upon the importance of the incarnation as a *cultural* event is an important one. In becoming flesh, Christ's identity is constituted by the Old Testament witness. Alternatively, we could speak of the Old Testament witness as an anticipatory dimension of incarnation.

In the two chapters that followed and which precede this one, I sought to provide a demonstration of the typological integrity of the scriptural witness. I began by exploring the way that the theme of Exodus pervades the New Testament, illustrating the unity of the canonical witness—previously affirmed theologically—on a textual level. My fourth chapter articulated the Exodus pattern in more detail, before exploring the various ways that the theme of sea crossing appears within many of its occurrences in the Scriptures. From these two chapters, I hope that a measure of the typological unity of the scriptural texts has been revealed. It is through the strength of the 'typological realism' of the

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<sup>1</sup> Vanhoozer 2005, 223

<sup>2</sup> Louth 1989, 120

Scriptures—to borrow Vanhoozer’s terminology—that they can establish a narrative world within which their readers themselves can be incorporated.

My first chapter dwelt on the world-creating power of language at considerable length. Language, I argued, constitutes our experience and mediates our reality. It is through language that being comes into presence. Language, Chauvet claims, gives human reality a ‘body’.<sup>3</sup> Although we are often inclined to regard language as something that stands outside of being, Chauvet, following Heidegger, insists that our reality is constituted and disclosed through language. If my case has been followed to this point, it should be apparent that this is not a reduction of reality to bare signs.<sup>4</sup> Rather than shrinking reality to some narrowly conceived bounds of language, producing an incorporeal and insubstantial vision of the world, the claim being made is that our reality, in all of its variegated fullness, is linguistically structured and that it is only through language that it can unveil itself.

The relationship between this and a principal argument of my second chapter may have passed unnoticed, so it is worth highlighting it at this point. Within my second chapter, I argued that many traditional accounts of typology have the tendency to focus upon the relationship between *events* in a manner that depreciates the importance of the *textual witness* to and *narration* of these events. I insisted, against this approach, that typology comes to us in an irreducibly and inescapably linguistic form. It is only through the language of the canonical witness that the events to which it bears witness are disclosed.

The opposition between sign and cause, described in detail in my first chapter, takes the form of the opposition between text and event within the second. Both of these oppositions can be overcome through a proper understanding of symbol and typology. This opposition has also exerted a considerable influence upon various accounts of the place of and relationship between the Scriptures and the sacraments within the life of the Church, a subject to which we will now turn.

## ***2. A Dramatic Doctrine of Scripture***

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<sup>3</sup> Chauvet 1995, 90

<sup>4</sup> Nor should ‘language’ be too narrowly identified with words and texts alone.

In *The Drama of Doctrine*, Vanhoozer articulates a stimulating evangelical account of Scripture and doctrine. Dominated by a vast, yet occasionally unwieldy, metaphorical casting of its subject matter in terms of the world of the theatre, *The Drama of Doctrine* is, among other things, an attempt to articulate a post-conservative account of *sola scriptura*. As a ‘canonical-linguistic’ approach to Christian theology, it presents itself as an alternative to George Lindbeck’s postliberal ‘cultural-linguistic’ approach. Vanhoozer shares Lindbeck’s opposition to the ‘experiential-expressivist’ liberal account of theology, which interprets doctrines ‘as noninformative and nondiscursive symbols of inner feelings, attitudes or existential orientations.’<sup>5</sup> He also shares a number of Lindbeck’s concerns with the fundamentalist and pre-critical ‘cognitive-propositional’ account of theology, which treats doctrine as an attempt to provide ‘propositions or truth claims about objective realities’ as a science might, although he regards this tradition more favourably than Lindbeck does.

Doctrine, for Vanhoozer, must not limit itself to truth alone (as the cognitive-propositional account is at risk of doing), nor to ways of living or even the meaning of life, but should ‘serve the purpose of fostering *truthful ways of living*.’<sup>6</sup> Through the faithful use of Scripture, it acts as direction for our participation in the ‘theo-drama’.

Vanhoozer criticizes Lindbeck’s cultural-linguistic model, with its emphasis upon explicating the ‘grammatical’ rules of the reading the Scriptures in the Church, for lacking non-circular criteria by which to identify competent readers.<sup>7</sup> Nor can such an approach present any consistent set of rules of Christian practice, as these vary considerably. Perhaps the greatest problem facing Lindbeck’s thesis is located in its lack of a principle by which the Scriptures can stand over against, challenge, and call the Church to reform.<sup>8</sup> The principle of *sola scriptura*, which stands for a ‘certain way of using Scripture in the church,’<sup>9</sup> seeks to ensure that the Church’s performance is always subject to the possibility of external challenge and correction.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Lindbeck 1984, 16

<sup>6</sup> Vanhoozer 2005, 14

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 120-121

<sup>8</sup> Vanhoozer observes of Lindbeck’s approach, ‘Strictly speaking, it is not the story as such but the way the story is used that is doctrinally normative.’ Ibid. 172.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. 153

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. 152

Vanhoozer situates his recovery of *sola scriptura* within a ‘canonical approach,’ which ‘takes the whole canon as the interpretative framework for understanding God, the world, oneself, and others.’<sup>11</sup> The canon is the authoritative ‘script’ of the divine drama, a drama within which our interpretation is also included.<sup>12</sup> Tradition plays an authoritative—albeit derivative (‘ministerial and magisterial’) and corrigible—role in conveying and maintaining the authority of Scripture.<sup>13</sup>

Vanhoozer here makes the key move of introducing the notion of the ‘canonical practice’—‘*a communicative practice in a canonical context with a covenantal aim.*’<sup>14</sup> Literary genres, Vanhoozer argues, are best understood as ‘forms of social action,’<sup>15</sup> corresponding to certain forms of life: ‘*genres provide direction for one’s fitting participation, whether by word or deed, in particular types of social situations.*’<sup>16</sup> Among the sorts of ‘canonical practices’ found in Scripture are such things as ‘recounting history (narrative), praising God (psalms), foretelling (prophecy), cultivating the fear of the Lord (wisdom), anticipating the end of history (apocalyptic).’<sup>17</sup> He writes:

*Becoming a Christian is a matter not simply of being “socialized” into accepting the canon but of being “canonized” into the social practices of the church. To be precise: canonical practices are the means by which God socializes us, through the ministry of the Spirit, into his own divine communicative praxis, into a covenantal way of being, into that distinct “being in covenantal relationship with the triune God” form of life.*<sup>18</sup>

As in a number of other recent doctrines of Scripture, Vanhoozer is concerned here to present the Scriptures as an *active* work of God in the economy of the gospel.<sup>19</sup> The Scriptures are not inert texts standing over against the great

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid. 149

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. 150

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 208

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. 216, emphasis original.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. 214

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. 215, emphasis original.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. 216. Vanhoozer here takes issue with Brevard Childs’ notion of canon, which fails sufficiently to distinguish the intentions of the ‘anonymous canonizers who shaped Scripture’ with the intentions of God himself. Vanhoozer insists that the canon must chiefly be seen as ‘an exemplar of divine use and divine practice.’ Ibid. 218–219.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. 220

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. 45. For other recent attempts to construct such a doctrine of Scripture, see, for instance, Work 2002 and Wright 2005.

acts of God as their written record (as the Biblical Theology movement maintained).<sup>20</sup> Rather, speaking itself is one of God's 'mighty acts' and the Scriptures are not merely a 'deposit' of revelation, but a powerful communicative act.<sup>21</sup> 'In sum: *the doctrine of Scripture must resist reducing the Bible to revelation, just as it must resist reducing revelation to either the merely propositional or the merely personal.*'<sup>22</sup> The words of Scripture do not merely convey information, but effect transformation: '*the Bible is thus the locus of God's ongoing communicative action in the church and in the world.*'<sup>23</sup> Scripture catches us up into the theo-drama of creation.<sup>24</sup>

One of the 'canonical practices' that Vanhoozer focuses upon is typology, or figural reading. He enumerates three different ways in which figural reading is canonical.<sup>25</sup> First, it is a form of reading illustrated within the canon itself. Second, it 'represents the inner logic or telos of the canon by interpreting the story of Israel and the story of Jesus as one story.'<sup>26</sup> Jesus, the Logos, is the key to the meaning of the entire canon and, indeed, to all of history.<sup>27</sup> Finally, it is canonical

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid. 46

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 48

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. 71, emphasis original

<sup>24</sup> In considering our relationship with Scripture, perhaps it is helpful to reflect upon the manner in which our posture towards it and theologies of it may subtly be shaped by the form within which we habitually encounter it. Has the fact that our most common mode of encountering the Scriptures is in the form of the solitary reading of a mass-produced and privately-owned printed text—with all books bound in a set order between two covers, with chapters and verses, concordances, and other navigational tools—distorted our concepts of the sort of entity that the Scripture is? We are accustomed instinctively and thoughtlessly to substitute the word 'reading' for 'hearing' in places where Scripture speaks of our proper relationship to it. Walter Ong has spoken of the 'shifting of the sensorium,' and the steady movement from an oral-aural world to a world characterized by 'visualism', as the spoken word is locked in space by script (Ong 1967, 8-9). Our struggle to understand the dynamism of the Scriptures, their active form and our appropriately receptive and responsive posture towards them, seems to arise in no small measure from a steady movement away from an oral-aural form of primary engagement with them. The text perceived visually is primarily situated spatially. However, the word that is spoken and heard operates in a temporal medium. Douglas Knight has suggested that the privileging of the eye within the sensorium within modernity has led us to think of knowledge in terms of detachment, as 'effortless vision' (Knight 2006, 182-183). By contrast, the public reading and hearing of the text will always take more of the character of a time-bound 'performance'. It seems to me that an integral dimension of our recovery of the notion of a dynamic doctrine of the Scriptures—of a world-creating Word that acts in time and catches us up within it—must be a restoration of the primacy of the mouth and the ear in our relationship to them. As Nicholas Lash (Lash 1986, 40) has observed, different kinds of text invite 'different kinds of activity' as 'the fundamental form of their interpretation.' A seismic shift in the forms of our engagement with and interpretation of the Scripture may unwittingly have been facilitated by changes in the 'material' form that the text took within the life of our communities.

<sup>25</sup> Vanhoozer 2005, 222

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. 223

‘in the sense that it is the rule for present-day Christians to make sense of *their* stories as Jesus did of his, precisely by reading their own lives in light of the life of Jesus.’<sup>28</sup> He sums up:

Learning to read the Scriptures figurally—the parts in light of the covenantal whole and the whole in light of the Christological center—helps us not only to speak properly of God but to see history as Jesus saw it: a unified theo-drama with himself as climax. *Figural interpretation is thus the canonical practice that inculcates typological realism: a practice that teaches us to see the history of Israel, our own personal histories, and world history in light of the history of the logos made flesh.*<sup>29</sup>

Vanhoozer’s category of theo-drama, a drama within which God acts mightily through his Word and in which we are caught up as participants, is one that is very useful for my current project. As I discussed at the start of this chapter, language mediates reality. The typology of Scripture, which is inescapably linguistic in character, is constitutive of the events to which it bears witness. As in Vanhoozer’s theology, the opposition between text and event is broken down: the divine communication of the text and the event in the theo-drama to which it bears witness are mutually constitutive dimensions of a unified process of divine action.

### ***3. Scripture and the Liturgical Drama***

In many respects, Vanhoozer’s ‘dramatic’ doctrine of Scripture promises a robust starting point for bringing our account of scriptural typology into contact with the actual life of the Church. Typology, as it functions in Vanhoozer’s account, is not a bare literary feature of the scriptural texts themselves, nor an exegetical curiosity of little consequence, but the concrete manifestation of the unity and continuity of God’s works in Christ. It is typology that establishes and reveals a divinely established unity between the scriptural narratives, Christ, the Church, and the individual believer. Through typological reading, we can recognize that, in union with Christ, we are the direct addressees of God’s communicative acts in Scripture and key figures within the larger theo-drama.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid. 222

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. 223, emphasis original

Vanhoozer observes: ‘The apostle Paul, for example, engaged in this canonical practice when he stated, “I have been crucified with Christ” (Gal. 2:19).’<sup>30</sup>

Considering the strength of his emphasis upon the category of drama, Vanhoozer’s account of liturgical ritual and the sacraments may come as something of a disappointment. Much of what he does say is helpful. He maintains that baptism is a ‘key scene’ in the theo-drama,<sup>31</sup> not just a social ritual, but a ‘means through which the Spirit unites us to the person and work of Christ,’<sup>32</sup> and ‘a sign of the covenant, the way in which one is publicly initiated into the drama of redemption as a willing participant.’<sup>33</sup> He writes:

Nothing draws us into the pattern of Jesus’ communicative action more than the rite of baptism. Baptism marks our entry into the church, our regeneration and purification from sin (Acts 22:16). More important, baptism enacts our solidarity with Jesus’ own death and resurrection; in baptism we participate in being buried with Jesus (united in death) and in being raised with Jesus (united in life).<sup>34</sup>

He compares our initiation into the theo-drama to Christ’s own initiation into his messianic work at his baptism.<sup>35</sup> He also speaks of the instruction received by catechumens in the early Church, preparing them for entry into the theo-drama in baptism.<sup>36</sup>

For Vanhoozer, the sacraments achieve more than the conveying of information: they ‘draw us into the action.’<sup>37</sup> It is their capacity to ‘draw us into the pattern of Jesus’ own communicative action’ that marks them out as means of grace.<sup>38</sup> Faced with the choice between an account of the sacraments focused upon ‘mediation’ (Calvin) and one focused upon ‘memorial’ (Barth), Vanhoozer proposes that we take the route of ‘mimēsis’:

Through baptism and the Lord’s Supper, Christ *presents* himself to believing communicants via a *real presentation* of the climactic events of redemptive history. By performing the biblical words and the sacramental

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid. 222

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. 75

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. 191

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. 140, cf. ibid. 103, 194, 255

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. 75

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. 194

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. 255

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. 75

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.



actions, we are *really* drawn into the ongoing theo-dramatic action by the Spirit.<sup>39</sup>

The sacraments bring together God's theo-dramatic action and our faithful witness and response. Within our performance of the sacraments—theo-dramatic actions instituted by Christ—by faith, we '*really participate* in what the symbolic actions signify.'<sup>40</sup>

Yet, despite such claims, there are disquieting indications that Vanhoozer's emphasis upon *communicative* action leads him to overstate the importance of human cognition in the operation of the sacraments. In many of his descriptions of the sacraments, Vanhoozer appears to render their efficacy contingent upon human understanding. He describes the sacraments as 'external aids—holy props—that nourish and strengthen faith.'<sup>41</sup> They are rendered efficacious by the Holy Spirit through faith, in a comparable manner to the word.<sup>42</sup> His discussion of the Supper is particularly illuminating:

The connection between participating in this central rite and the need for self-examination is especially striking. "Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup" (1 Cor. 11:28). What is required is *fitting participation*. Doctrine is necessary precisely because of the ever-present possibility of *inappropriate* performance. Paul warns against "mechanical eating," against eating and drinking the covenant meal "without discerning the body" (1 Cor. 11:29), that is, without discerning the meaning of the symbolic action.<sup>43</sup>

Vanhoozer's theatrical account of the sacraments frames them as symbolic actions that we perform, but as performances that are directed primarily towards a faithful cognition. Relating his position to that of Calvin, it is the meaning that the sacraments represent to the *mind* that Vanhoozer highlights.<sup>44</sup> 'The sacraments in particular assist us to relive the climactic scenes that, quite graphically, remind us

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid. 413

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. 412

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. 410

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 410-411

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. 411

<sup>44</sup> Vanhoozer uses the following quotations from Calvin: 'If the Spirit be lacking, the sacraments can accomplish nothing more in our minds than the splendor of the sun shining upon blind eyes' and '[T]hey have this characteristic over and above the word because they represent them [the promises of God] for us as painted in a picture from life.' Ibid.

of what God has done in Christ, and in so doing remind us who we are.<sup>45</sup> Through our faithful understanding and response to the re-enactment that occurs within them, we are more firmly rooted in the theo-drama that they re-present. Vanhoozer's description of the sacraments as 'props' that are 'external' is revealing:<sup>46</sup> this description implies an understanding of the sacraments as primarily spectacles presented before the vision of a detached consciousness and only secondarily as actions to be performed or inhabited. In these claims, as in his claims concerning the Supper, our faithful cognition and grasping of meaning appear to play a crucial role in securing the efficacy of the sacraments.<sup>47</sup>

Vanhoozer's approach is vulnerable to two key criticisms. The first is that it diminishes the role of the sacraments as *performative* language acts. The second is that it denigrates the place of the body and the noncognitive dimension of our selves within the divine economy.

#### 4. *The Sacraments as Performative Language Acts*

Beginning with the first of these two objections, Vanhoozer's account of the sacraments appears to present the sacraments as if they were intensifying representations of the written word of Scripture in a different mode. As such, their *communicative* character is emphasized. We are to grasp the meaning of this communicative action and participate in the communicative act ourselves. Although there *is* a genuine participation involved here—we are drawn into the theo-drama as active participants—the participation in question hinges upon the

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid. 412

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. 410

<sup>47</sup> A thorough response to Vanhoozer's position would need to involve a discussion of the meaning of the terms ἀνάμνησις, δοκιμάζω, and διακρίνω as they function in 1 Corinthians 11. Each of these terms can be understood in ways that removes the attention from subjective mental states to the actual performance of the rite. Following such as Joachim Jeremias, ἀνάμνησις could be referred to a more public act of memorial, rather than chiefly to the subjective act of recalling. In the context of 1 Corinthians 11, the examination in view within the verb δοκιμάζω need not be the subjective introspection envisaged by some, but rather a more objective examination of one's actions and relations. Finally, the act of discernment that the verb διακρίνω calls people to in verse 29 is less a conceptual grasp of the theological 'meaning' of the sacrament than it is a practical cognizance of one's fellow members of the body of Christ in the meal that manifests and effects the Church's unity (cf. Fee 1987, 564). Shifting our reading of these terms in such a manner moves us away from a primarily contemplative understanding of the sacrament to one within which its performance assumes its appropriate primacy—'Do this...'

believing response of the subjects of the sacraments, a response made possible by the Holy Spirit.<sup>48</sup>

The participation in view is participation through *mimēsis*.<sup>49</sup> The sort of *mimēsis* that Vanhoozer appears to envisage when speaking about baptism, for instance, depends heavily upon the faithful subjective disposition of the one being baptized. The form of the rite of baptism itself does not seem to be sufficient to constitute a *mimēsis* of Christ's death and resurrection (cf. Romans 6:5): the faith of the subject of the rite is also required.<sup>50</sup>

Vanhoozer's account also prioritizes the notion of the sacraments as a spectacle presented to the eyes of the faithful, through which their faith is nourished by means of reflection, over any active dimension. Rather than the sacraments themselves publicly effecting a new reality, it is our subjective observation and consequent faithful performance of the sacraments that renders them efficacious. In privileging our spectation, it seems to me that Vanhoozer unwittingly adopts the visualist posture of modernity.<sup>51</sup> His approach also

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<sup>48</sup> The sacraments, Vanhoozer maintains, are made efficacious through faith and the Spirit (Vanhoozer 2005, 410-411).

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. 411-413

<sup>50</sup> Vanhoozer's accompanying focus upon adult and believing recipients of the sacraments (Ibid. 411-412) makes me wonder what place infants and children occupy within this framework.

<sup>51</sup> Augustine famously spoke of the sacraments as 'visible words' (*verba visibilia*, *Contra Faustum* 19.16), a description that Vanhoozer mentions in *ibid.* 74-75. However, we would do well to examine the wider context of Augustine's statement, as it does not lend support to many of the ways in which the term has subsequently been used (Leithart 2011 first alerted me to this fact). First of all, in *Contra Faustum* 19.11, Augustine observes: 'There can be no religious society, whether the religion be true or false, without some sacrament or visible symbol [*signaculorum vel sacramentorum visibilium*] to serve as a bond of union.' In Augustine's treatment of the 'visibility' of the sacraments here, his attention is focused, not upon the Christian gospel being represented in a visual form to the mind of the believer in the sacraments, but upon the necessity of public 'symbolic exchange' (as I discussed in chapter 1) for the existence of a religious community: without forms of symbolic exchange, a society is without the means to effect and reveal its union. The 'visibility' in view here is that of the forms of public symbolic exchange through which a religious society is established and manifested. Second, the visibility of the sacraments in *Contra Faustum* 19.16 is contrasted, not with the audibility of the word, but with the invisibility of the eternal spiritual gift of Christ. Within the passage in question, Augustine addresses the manner in which the sacraments are like words that pass and are surpassed by new words in the passage of time. He writes: 'For if in language the form of the verb changes in the number of letters and syllables according to the tense, as *done* signifies the past, and *to be done* the future, why should not the symbols which declare Christ's death and resurrection to be accomplished, differ from those which predicted their accomplishment, as we see a difference in the form and sound of the words, past and future, suffered and to suffer, risen and to rise? For material symbols are nothing else than visible speech, which, though sacred, is changeable and transitory. For while God is eternal, the water of baptism, and all that is material in the sacrament, is transitory: the very word "God," which must be pronounced in the consecration, is a sound which passes in a moment. The actions and sounds pass away, but their efficacy remains the same, and the spiritual gift thus communicated is eternal.' Read in context, Augustine's treatment and

suggests that, despite attempts to address it elsewhere, a residual language-being dualism (which I discussed in the opening chapter) is still operative in his thinking. The split between symbol and reality is one between the external rite and the internal grace and faithful disposition that correspond to it. While symbol and reality may be joined in the believer's faithful *mimēsis*, a fundamental breach between the two remains.

A further consequence of privileging the spectacular character of the sacraments is a diminishing attention to their *social* force. While incorporation into and participation within the Church may be part of the meaning of the sacraments that must be grasped by the believing subject, such privileging of the visual emphasizes the *representation* of this reality to the individual's consciousness over the enactment of this reality in public and communal practice. The believing subject is primarily characterized as an individual spectator, only secondarily as an embedded participant in communal practice. This approach also continually invites the representation and conscious recognition of the meaning of the ritual to interpose itself between us and its performance, rather than according primacy to the action and allowing meaning to emerge from practice. Where this posture becomes especially pronounced, people can develop a propensity to fixate upon teaching the 'meaning' of the sacraments in a manner that detracts from the rich openness of their performance. By 'explaining' the sacraments in other terms, we can appear to render the actual performance of the sacraments superfluous.<sup>52</sup> While Vanhoozer's account of *mimēsis* avoids this extreme, he has not sufficiently overcome the problematic posture that characterizes it.

Lacking in Vanhoozer's account is a robust presentation of the sacraments as *performative* rituals. In the opening chapter of this thesis, I discussed the 'illocutionary-performative' dimension of language. Such illocutionary-performative language acts can bring about a new order of relations between persons. This form of symbolic efficacy can be seen in such ceremonial performances as those of the wedding or the coronation. Chauvet provides the following description of this:

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understanding of *verba visibilia* markedly differs from many of those who have adopted his terminology.

<sup>52</sup> Koester & Searle 2004, 134-135

The ritual enunciation of the formula “I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” is an eminently performative language act. Pronounced by a legitimate authority (normally, an ordained minister) acting in conformity with prescriptions which are the conditions of the rite’s social validity and guarantee the consensus of the group, this language act, as in every rite of passage or institution, “consecrates a difference,” as P. Bourdieu puts it; it makes the difference “known and recognized,” and thus “it calls it into existence inasmuch as it is a social difference.”<sup>53</sup>

Symbolic efficacy accomplishes a genuine transformation. Through the symbolic rituals of a coronation, for instance, a remarkable alteration in—or public manifestation<sup>54</sup> of—the status and identity of the newly invested monarch is brought about. After the coronation, other persons will treat the new monarch differently, relating to him as subjects. The new monarch’s words and commands will possess an authority that they did not possess before. The new monarch must also learn to think of himself and to act in a new manner befitting and according to his new status.

To some, the performance of a symbolic ceremony, investiture in the raiment of royalty, the granting of new titles and privileges, and the according of new authority may still appear to be but slender threads upon which to hang as grand an effect as that of transforming a man into or manifesting him as a king. The king himself, deeply acquainted with his own weakness and mortality, may sense this most keenly, seeing the symbols of his rule as nothing but a fragile semblance. The ‘hollow crown’ speech in Shakespeare’s *Richard II* describes just such a crisis of symbolic efficacy, as the symbols of Richard’s kingship are sapped of their imaginative power, both through Bolingbroke’s rebellion and the growing breach between the ‘two bodies’ of the king in Richard’s own mind.<sup>55</sup>

Chauvet continues:

Symbolic efficacy is “completely real in that it *really* transforms the consecrated persons: it transforms the perceptions the *other agents* have of these persons ... and at the same time the perception these persons have of *themselves* and the behavior they believe themselves bound to

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<sup>53</sup> Chauvet 1995, 438-439

<sup>54</sup> As a coronation can serve as a manifestation of a sovereignty already possessed, so baptism, while formally conferring new privileges, can also be a manifestation of an existing relationship.

<sup>55</sup> Kantorowicz 1997, 24-41 provides a detailed discussion of the theme of the king’s two bodies in Shakespeare’s play.

adopt in order to conform to this perception.” So much so that “the indicative mood in this case functions as an imperative.... ‘Become what you are.’” ... In the eyes of all, the baptized persons are really different from what they were before. The rite’s symbolic efficacy lies in their *change of status* and, since here description is prescription, in the duty enjoined on them to henceforth *conform their behavior* to this new status.<sup>56</sup>

We *confirm* the symbolic efficacy of the sacraments as we *conform* ourselves—or as we *are conformed*<sup>57</sup>—to the change that they have effected. The symbolic efficacy of the wedding ceremony is confirmed as the married couple treat each other as husband and wife and as society in general treats them differently from the way it did before their wedding. The symbolic efficacy of baptism is confirmed in part as those who have been baptized are welcomed as brothers and sisters, made participants in the Eucharist, and addressed as the sons and daughters of God.<sup>58</sup>

If baptism does not have such symbolic efficacy—as in Vanhoozer’s account—the ‘imperative’ ceases to be the way in which we *confirm* the reality established by the sacrament—something that springs from the ‘indicative’ of the new reality baptism effects—but will become the means by which the reality itself is effected. This could be compared to a situation in which wedding ceremonies were abolished and, rather than being brought into the institution through the wedding’s symbolic efficacy, people entered into marriage as they routinely performed the typical actions of a loving married couple. Such an account is not altogether without symbolic efficacy, but it is a deeply attenuated one. It is also insufficient to support the warnings that we encounter in such scriptures as 1 Corinthians 10:1-11, where the sacraments are implicitly

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<sup>56</sup> Chauvet 1995, 439

<sup>57</sup> As God is the Guarantor of the return-gift, sanctification is primarily received as a promise that we will one day be in actuality who we have been declared to be in Christ, rather than merely as a duty.

<sup>58</sup> Kurt Stasiak’s account of baptism (Stasiak is concerned to present a theological rationale for paedobaptism) in terms of adoption is a helpful lens for our understanding (Stasiak 1996, 132-140). Adopted children are incorporated into and identified with their new family. Their adoption is an objective fact, a gift, and a symbolic exchange, without overriding their will. As Stasiak observes, although the fact of their adoption may be known to the adopted child throughout their life, the meaning of their adoption will be something that is only gradually revealed to them and into which they grow over time. To Stasiak’s points, we should add the observation that the meaning of adoption also needs to be confirmed through the adoptive parents’ admission of the adopted child into the full life and love of their home and all of the privileges of being their child, and through society’s treatment of the adopted child as belonging to their new parents.

characterized as possessing a more objective force, their symbolic efficacy not ultimately dependent upon the faith of the ones receiving them.

A noteworthy feature of this account is its social character: symbolic efficacy is grounded in the consensus of the socio-cultural system within which the symbols operate. The change baptism accomplishes occurs within the interpersonal medium of a social body. Of course, this is not *any* social body, but the Church—the family of God, the body of Christ, and the Temple of the Holy Spirit. The symbols that we perform are not bare constructs of mere popular convention, but *instituted* symbols performed by *authorized* parties. On account of the divinely authorized and instituted character of the rite of baptism and the particular presence of, communion with, and relationship to God enjoyed in the society of the Church, we can affirm Christian baptism as an efficacious ‘means of grace’, without thereby collapsing the theological into the anthropological, or dispensing with the need for faithful response to God’s gracious act.

On such an account, baptism has a more public and objective force: much as the ‘efficacy’ of a wedding ceremony is not ultimately contingent upon the subsequent faithfulness of the newlyweds, so baptism ‘changes’ us whether we respond in faith or not.<sup>59</sup> The change that it brings about is real, whether or not its subjects respond appropriately, because they now occupy a different position in the social and relational order.

There are, of course, dangers to which we must be alert. Chauvet cautions:

It is one thing to be proclaimed a son or daughter for God and brother and sister for others in Jesus Christ, to be recognized as such by the group, and to be authentically so on the *social* level; it is quite another to be so on the *theological* level of faith, hope, and charity.... [W]ho are in a position to judge the truth of their faith and conversion? As a consequence, it is impossible for any of us to pronounce on the effective reception of God’s gift—a reception which, as Augustine stressed apropos baptism, is always dependent on faith.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> It is on account of the efficacy of the wedding ceremony that the subsequent unfaithfulness of a spouse can be called ‘adulterous’. It should also be noted that, whether or not we choose to enumerate marriage among the sacraments, we claim a divinely guaranteed efficacy for the symbolic rituals of the wedding ceremony: ‘Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder.’

<sup>60</sup> Chauvet 1995, 443-444

Yet, irrespective of its effective reception, the *gift*—of a new status and mode of relationship—received by the baptized is real.

### 5. *The Sacraments and the Body*

My second objection to Vanhoozer's approach to the sacraments is to their focus upon the mind to the relative neglect of both the body and the noncognitive dimensions of our being. Vanhoozer's emphasis is upon the way that the sacraments remind us, paint a picture for us, and accomplish something in our minds. For such accounts, the physicality of the sacraments and the role played by the body in the performance of them may serve the purpose of providing an intensifying medium for God's revelation. This bodily medium of divine revelation can be viewed as a divine accommodation to the weakness and dullness of human understanding, with an implied opposition between our mental faculties and our physical senses and the privileging of the former over the latter.<sup>61</sup> The mind is addressed through the graphic portrayals provided by the actions of the body: the significance of the actions is located in what they represent to the spectating mind. However, the possibility that the body itself is addressed more directly is not explored.

The underlying picture of the human being that is often operative in such accounts has been challenged by philosophers such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Merleau-Ponty's emphasizes the necessarily *embodied* and *embedded* character of human thought, challenging the common opposition between mental and bodily action.<sup>62</sup> His work seeks to restore the body to its proper place at the heart of our thinking and perception.<sup>63</sup> 'The body is the vehicle of being in the world, and having a body is, for a living creature, to be intervolved in a definite environment, to identify oneself with certain projects and be continually committed to them.'<sup>64</sup> Our bodies are habituated to our world and we make our way through the world,

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<sup>61</sup> See, for instance, Calvin's treatment of the materiality of the sacraments in *Institutes* IV.xiv.3.

<sup>62</sup> Romdenh-Romluc 2011, 184

<sup>63</sup> 'We have relearned to feel our body; we have found underneath the objective and detached knowledge of the body that other knowledge which we have of it in virtue of its always being with us and of the fact that we are our body. In the same way we shall need to reawaken our experience of the world as it appears to us in so far as we are in the world through our body, and in so far as we perceive the world with our body. But by thus remaking contact with the body and with the world, we shall also rediscover ourselves, since, perceiving as we do with our body, the body is a natural self and, as it were, the subject of perception.' Merleau-Ponty 1962, 239.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* 94



not as detached observers, but as engaged and embodied actors. Our bodies develop their own know-how of the world through habit, a know-how that need not be conceptually mediated.<sup>65</sup>

The significance of the work of Merleau-Ponty and Pierre Bourdieu for understanding worship is taken up at length in the recent work of James K.A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*.<sup>66</sup> Smith offers an explanation of worship, liturgy, and the sacraments that is founded upon the anthropology advanced by these thinkers. Within this anthropology, it is the bodily and the noncognitive dimensions of our being that take centre stage. The more conceptual levels of our thought *emerge* from a precognitive imaginative rendering of our world.

For Smith, imagination is a more aesthetic faculty closely bound up with our bodies:

As embodied creatures, our orientation to the world begins from, and lives off of, the fuel of our bodies, including the “images” of the world that are absorbed by our bodies. On this picture, the imagination is a kind of midlevel organizing or synthesizing faculty that constitutes the world for us in a primarily affective mode—what Gaston Bachelard calls, in his “phenomenology of the imagination,” “the poetic register.”<sup>67</sup>

Our embodied imaginations are shaped by liturgical practices and most powerfully by story, which can resonate with us on a deeply visceral level.<sup>68</sup> Stories form in us the habits of emotional perception through which we arrive at our ‘take’ of the situations within which we find ourselves.<sup>69</sup> In his earlier work, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*, Smith argued for a movement away from a focus upon ‘worldviews’ to attention upon ‘social imaginaries’, a term that Smith borrows from Charles Taylor:<sup>70</sup>

The “social imaginary” is an affective, noncognitive understanding of the world. It is described as an *imaginary* (rather than a *theory*) because it is fuelled by the stuff of the imagination rather than the intellect: it is made up of, and embedded in, stories, narratives, myths, and icons. These

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid. 167

<sup>66</sup> Smith 2013

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. 17-18

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. 108-109

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. 39

<sup>70</sup> Smith 2009, 65

visions capture our hearts and imaginations by “lining” our imagination, as it were—providing us with frameworks of “meaning” by which we make sense of our world and our calling in it. An irreducible understanding of the world resides in our intuitive, precognitive grasp of these stories.<sup>71</sup>

Smith gives examples of secular ‘liturgies’—perhaps most notably that of the shopping mall—which serve as pedagogies of desire and the imagination. ‘[L]iturgies—whether “sacred” or “secular”—shape and constitute our identities by forming our most fundamental desires and our most basic attunement to the world.’<sup>72</sup>

Through this valorization of the noncognitive and the bodily, Smith paves the way for a renewed emphasis upon the bodily character of the sacraments and the liturgy. Following Bourdieu, Smith argues that ‘my incorporation into a social body is effected through the *social* body co-opting *my* body.’<sup>73</sup> My body is initiated into the social body, wherein it is formed into a distinctive *habitus*, or orientation. As the social order addresses my body and subjects it to its particular formation, I am guided into a particular way of perceiving, thinking, and acting within the world.

That incorporation into a social body occurs through the social body’s co-option of our physical bodies is a claim with obvious and immediate relevance to the rite of baptism.<sup>74</sup> Baptism is a rite performed upon bodies and a ritual connected with the fate of the body (death and resurrection in Christ). This account also highlights the sociological dimensions of the rite of baptism, dimensions that are easily neglected or obscured.<sup>75</sup> Baptism is a rite performed by a representative of a social body upon our bodies, by which we are admitted to the fellowship of that body. It is also the means by which the social body itself is forged, identified, and characterized. Smith observes that the practice of baptism ‘both makes and signifies a social reality’ and that, when it is performed, the

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid. 68

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. 25

<sup>73</sup> Smith 2013, 94

<sup>74</sup> Cavanaugh 1998, which focuses on the practice of torture in General Augusto Pinochet’s Chile, is a powerful study of the weakening and depoliticization of the Church when she abandons her claim to bodies, ceding them to other powers. The Church in Chile had characterized itself as the ‘soul of Chile’, surrendering the body to the government and the military. Until the Church addressed the deficit in its Eucharistic theology and claimed the bodies of its members once again, it was not effective in standing against the torture of the regime.

<sup>75</sup> Smith 2009, 182-190; Jordan 1997, 86-106

congregation are participants, not merely spectators.<sup>76</sup> The congregation must commit themselves to recognize, love, and nurture the newly baptized members of the body in its shared life. As I have already argued, the efficacy of the rite is a symbolic efficacy and, the Church's treatment of newly baptized persons as full members is both an effect of and something that confirms and enacts this efficacy.

One of the implications of this account of baptism is that the most fundamental direction of Christian formation is from the outside-in.<sup>77</sup> Baptism forms persons by forming them into and within a society. If as human beings our most fundamental existence is in our being embodied persons, embedded within a social order and world, rather than in being detached thinking individuals then, far from denigrating baptism as a mere 'external' rite, we can recognize that it acts upon the very root of our existence. N.T. Wright's commentary on Colossians 2:11 explores this theme within the biblical text itself:

As a result of their baptism into Christ, the Colossians now belong first and foremost to the family of God, and not, therefore, to the human families (and their local 'rulers') to which they formerly belonged. 'Body' can, in fact, easily carry the connotation of a group of people, needing further redefinition to make it clear which group is envisaged (as in 'body of Christ'). In that context 'flesh' can easily provide the further requisite definition, since it can carry not only the meanings of 'sinful human nature' but also, simultaneously, the meanings of *family* solidarity. The phrase can thus easily mean 'in the stripping off of the old human solidarities'. The convert, in stripping off his clothes for baptism (the baptismal reference in the next verse has coloured the language) leaves behind, as every adult candidate for baptism in (say) a Muslim or Hindu society knows, the solidarities of the old life, the network of family and society to which, until then, he or she has given primary allegiance.<sup>78</sup>

Such an anthropology and understanding of baptism also accentuates the political dimensions of the sacrament.<sup>79</sup> If societies exert authority through co-opting and laying claim to the bodies of their members, the reassertion of the Church's claim to the bodies of its members should yield a renewed sense of the

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<sup>76</sup> Smith 2009, 185

<sup>77</sup> Jordan 1997, 91-92

<sup>78</sup> Wright 1986, 106

<sup>79</sup> Conversely, churches that downplay the embodied character of baptism, treating it chiefly as 'external' theatre for the sake of the minds of the faithful, are at risk of ceding the territory of the body to competing powers.

‘political’ dimensions of its existence.<sup>80</sup> As Leonard Vander Zee remarks, ‘we too are co-opted—not by a torturing state, but by our market-driven, consumerist corporate economy that claims our bodies as advertising billboards and pleasure machines.’<sup>81</sup> As it is called to be a singular sacrifice of many bodies (Romans 12:1)—a sacrifice which I related to baptism in an earlier chapter—the Church finds itself competing for the real estate of the body with many other worldly powers.<sup>82</sup>

### ***6. The Efficacious Typology of Vanhoozer’s Doctrine of Scripture***

By now the flaws and limitations of Vanhoozer’s account of the sacraments should be apparent. However, despite these flaws and limitations, I believe that Vanhoozer’s doctrine of Scripture will prove quite serviceable for my account of baptism. Having dwelt at some length upon its weaknesses and offered antidotes to them, I am now in a position to turn to its strengths.

Before I do so, however, it would be beneficial briefly to outline the purposes for which I am seeking to deploy it. In my opening chapter, I explored the language-being dualism, observing that biblical typology is likely to find itself placed on the language side of this divide, diminished in its significance. The breach that Daniélou recognized between the dogmatic theory of baptism and the typology of baptism is largely sustained by this dualism. The language-being dualism can also mould our understanding of the relationship between Word and sacrament: the Word becomes an ‘instrumental intermediary’ and detached signifier of being, rather than being ‘*the meeting place where* being and humankind mutually stepped forward toward one another.’<sup>83</sup> In my attempt to offer an account of an efficacious rite of baptism that is grounded in scriptural typology, I must address this breach between language and being and Word and sacrament. I must establish continuity between Word and sacrament, demonstrating the sacraments’ rootedness in the Word and the Word’s ‘sacramental’ character.

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<sup>80</sup> Cf. Cavanaugh 1998

<sup>81</sup> Vander Zee 2004, 228

<sup>82</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 is an example of how Christ’s authority over the body, characterized as the temple of the Holy Spirit, is asserted against the rival claims of sexual autonomy.

<sup>83</sup> Chauvet 1995, 33

Vanhoozer's account of Scripture affords us a way in which to overcome this breach. His recovery of a doctrine of *sola scriptura* underlines the character of Scripture as an originating, authorizing, constituting, and founding divine covenant Word. Not solely an inspired human testimony in *response* to God's great acts, Scripture is itself one of those great divine acts. Furthermore, Scripture logically precedes the Church. Vanhoozer writes:

To think of the church as the context within which Scripture becomes canon appears plausible in terms of history and sociology, but it is theologically inadequate. ... *[I]t is not the church's use but the triune God's use of Scripture that makes it canon.* That the church recognizes the canon authenticates the church rather than the canon, which needs no ecclesial approval to be what it is: the Word of God. *Canonicity is the criterion of catholicity, not vice versa.* This insight also marks the definitive break between the canonical-linguistic approach and its cultural-linguistic counterpart.<sup>84</sup>

This move is of pivotal importance. Vanhoozer's account of *sola scriptura* is, at its heart, an insistence upon the claim that it is the Scripture that brings the Church into existence, rather than the Church the Scripture.<sup>85</sup> Through this move, Scripture is allowed to assume its full and proper stature as the divine Word that constitutes and establishes the Church. Vanhoozer's doctrine of Scripture is one in which Scripture is a profoundly *efficacious* performative word.<sup>86</sup> This already goes some way to addressing the breach between Scripture and sacrament, language and being. It offers us a robust foundation for presenting the efficacy

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<sup>84</sup> Vanhoozer 2005, 149-150

<sup>85</sup> Chauvet (1995, 206ff.) presents a contrasting account, explicitly challenging *sola scriptura*, on the basis of the nature of the relationship between reader and text. He argues that the reader of a text is essential to the writing itself. The highest form of canonical text is one for whom its 'reception by the reading group is constitutive of the text' (ibid. 208). He writes: 'Magisterial canonical sanction is nothing else but the decisive social expression of this process: an authority, recognized by the group as legitimate, officially validates this recognition and thereby entrusts the text to the group as its authentic "*exemplar*."' He continues: 'the sanction of canonicity unfolds in the community's process of writing itself "into the book it reads" ... —a process constitutive of every text, but particularly powerful in the sacred texts. Book and community are recognized as inseparable. The book is nothing without the community, and the community finds in the book the mirror of its identity. The norm is thus not the Book alone, but the Book in the hand of the community. The Church thus represents the impossibility of *sola scriptura*' (ibid. 209). I do not believe that Chauvet's objections to *sola scriptura* undermine Vanhoozer's case. Vanhoozer's account of *sola scriptura* is one within which the community plays a central part. The Scripture is never envisaged as standing alone, apart from the Church—as Chauvet appears to presume the position must entail—but rather *sola scriptura* is the claim that the divine word is authoritative over the Church.

<sup>86</sup> The primary context for such a word is not in a book on a shelf, but in public reading in the Christian assembly.

and constitutive power of the sacraments as existing in continuity with the efficacy and constitutive power of the Scriptures.

Where such an assertion of Scripture as God's authorizing and authenticating Word is absent, Scripture's authority and revelation will more likely be regarded as second order, deriving from a more primary authoritative revelation. As typology is rooted in the text, as I argued in my second chapter, an alienation of primary authority from the text will encourage its depreciation and neglect. However, by restoring a primary authority to the divine Word in the Scriptures, typology can assume a new significance. It holds open the possibility that typology itself may be in some sense constitutive of the efficacy of the divine word of the Scriptures.

The first critical move in Vanhoozer's doctrine of Scripture, then, is to restore Scripture as the divine word that establishes the Church, as one of God's mighty works in the theo-drama, rather than just a responsive witness to God's great deeds. The second is closely related to this. By accentuating the *active* character of Scripture, Vanhoozer is able to advance a more participatory account of the Church's relationship to it. Where the active character of Scripture is not so emphasized, it is liable to be presented more as a textual *object* that exists over against its readers—a map to be read for information, rather than an itinerary to be followed.<sup>87</sup> The relationship between the text and its readers, so framed, is not a promising starting point for a participatory account.

Vanhoozer's rendering of Scripture as divine action is accompanied by an account of the manner in which the Church enters into this action. Here Vanhoozer's reframing of the concept of 'genre' in terms of participation in action in specific social situations is important. Understood in such a manner, Scripture is a text that can be inhabited and participated in. Vanhoozer brings this concept of Scripture into yet clearer focus through the category of 'canonical practices'. As he writes: 'canonical-linguistic theology means being instructed by, being apprenticed to, and participating in the communicative practices that comprise the Scriptures.'<sup>88</sup> The category of 'canonical practices' serves to emphasize the relationship between the two key moves that he has made: we

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<sup>87</sup> Candler 2006, 41ff. '[T]he route to *salus* is not *contained* by the text, but, as it were, furnished by it.' Ibid. 45.

<sup>88</sup> Vanhoozer 2005, 211

participate in action and in practices that *God* has authorized and originated. As we do so, we are constituted in God's truth: 'To practice *sola scriptura* means to participate in the canonical practices that form, inform, and transform our speaking, thinking, and living—practices that the Spirit uses to conform us to the image of God in Christ.'<sup>89</sup>

It is within a third move that Vanhoozer makes that his account really demonstrates its importance for my project. This move occurs in his specifying of *typological realism* and *figural reading* as the fact and corresponding practice that most ground the participatory character of our relationship to God's canonical Word.<sup>90</sup> Typological realism is the 'glue' that operates in the medium of history.

### ***7. Participation and Time***

In my opening chapter, I insisted upon the necessity of a recovery of a sense of typology as establishing a relationship between persons, events, and itineraries in *time*, discouraging the presentation of this relationship as one existing between places or persons on a primarily synchronic plane. Within the three chapters that followed, I traced some of the nodes and threads of the vast historical web of scriptural typology, especially as they are woven out from the central theme of Exodus. Typologically, the event of the Exodus is the backbone of the divine history, a great movement in time that gathers other movements in time to itself, a movement that itself anticipates, culminates in, and is climactically recapitulated by Christ's saving work.

As Vanhoozer maintains, the typological realism of the Scripture opens up to include our lives also, catching us up into the theo-drama.<sup>91</sup> I have argued that typological relations are 'identity-forging bonds' and modes of participation. When considering participation, we are often more inclined to conceptualize the most pronounced forms of participation as operating within a synchronic spatial medium—as being bound together with a common life or substance, for instance.<sup>92</sup> The participatory significance of typology, as it chiefly highlights

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid. 237

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. 221-224

<sup>91</sup> 1 Corinthians 10, which I discussed in some length a couple of chapters ago, well illustrates the manner in which typological realism can place the Church within the scriptural narrative.

<sup>92</sup> See Billings 2007 for an extensive discussion of John Calvin's doctrine of union with and participation in Christ, where such themes emerge.

connections operating within a temporal and historical medium, can be underexplored as a result.

In his doctrine of the Eucharist, Calvin maintains that the Spirit ‘truly unites things separated in space’ (*Institutes* IV.xvii.10), so that the minds of believers are raised up to his heavenly presence and that Christ and his substance are present to us as we seek him in such a manner. Discussing Calvin’s doctrine, Douglas Farrow notes its focus upon *spatial* categories and its relative neglect of *time*:

I am only going to observe that a shared vertical orientation made it difficult for Calvin to factor *time* into his eucharistic equation, that is, to subject temporal relations to the same christological and pneumatological reordering with which he experimented in spatial relations. As I have noted elsewhere, Calvin handled the dialectic of presence and absence almost exclusively in spatial terms, and to that extent in a *non-eschatological* fashion. Only in the Spirit can we hope to ‘leap the infinite spaces’ separating earth from heaven. But is there no equally formidable barrier raised by time? Are we to suppose that the ascended one shares with us a common time, or that he exists timelessly? Surely the former idea reduces the ascension to some form of physical locomotion, while the latter fades off into the docetic and the gnostic. Neither can support a sound doctrine of the eucharist.<sup>93</sup>

Such a failure to attend to the medium of time is hardly exclusive to Calvin. Questions of participation habitually neglect the temporal character of our relations. For instance, in reflecting upon Paul’s claim that we participate in the sin and guilt of Adam, the fact that we fall under his judgment makes more sense when we consider that we are ‘not standing at some distance in space, but are at different moments of time.’<sup>94</sup> While the imputation of the guilt of one individual to another individual spatially detached from the first naturally seems unjust, the issue assumes a different aspect when we consider their relation to be temporal. Much as we can benefit or suffer from the consequences of the actions of our forebears and share in something of their responsibility,<sup>95</sup> so the consequences of Adam’s actions ripple down through the generations of history.

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<sup>93</sup> Farrow 2001, 182. I wonder whether, rather than *time*, it would be more accurate to say that Calvin doesn’t factor *eschatology* into the equation.

<sup>94</sup> Leithart 2006b, responding to Crisp 2004.

<sup>95</sup> For instance, as a Briton, I enjoy both benefits and guilt arising from my nation’s colonial history. As long as I enjoy material and cultural privileges that find some of their source in the oppressive and unjust actions of past generations, I will also share in a measure of their guilt.



The neglect of the temporal dimension is in part, I believe, a result of the spatialization that results from a privileging of the visual sense. The modern subject implicitly casts himself as a knower standing over against and surveying a spatialized realm of knowledge, within which temporal relations themselves are re-rendered as if spatial in character. Time is divided into discrete moments, and conceived of in a manner conforming to the model of objects in space. Henri Bergson remarks: ‘when we speak of time, more often than not we think of a homogeneous milieu where the events or facts of consciousness line themselves up, juxtaposing themselves as if in space, and succeed in forming a distinct multiplicity.’<sup>96</sup>

Criticizing such a conception of time, Bergson argues that what it neglects is the fact of time as *duration*. Thinking of time as a succession of discrete instances—the spatialized understanding that Bergson is challenging—cannot do justice to our intuition or experience of time.<sup>97</sup> In challenging this mode of conceiving time, Bergson offers us an illustration from music, drawing our attention to the nature of a melody:

Could we not say that, if these notes succeed one another, we still perceive them as if they were inside one another and their ensemble were like a living being whose parts, though distinct, interpenetrate through the very effect of their solidarity? The proof is that we break the rhythm by holding one note of the melody too long. It is not its exaggerated length as such that will avert us to our mistake, but rather the qualitative change brought to the musical phrase as a whole. One could thus conceive succession without distinction as a musical penetration, a solidarity, an intimate organization of elements of which each would be representative of the whole, indistinguishable from it, and would not isolate itself from the whole except for abstract thought.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Cited in Guerlac 2006, 62. See, however, Merleau-Ponty 2002, 482n3: ‘In order to arrive at authentic time it is neither necessary nor sufficient to condemn the spatialization of time as does Bergson. It is not necessary, since time is exclusive of space only if we consider space as objectified in advance, and ignore that primordial spatiality which we have tried to describe, and which is the abstract form of our presence in the world. It is not sufficient since, even when the systematic translation of time into spatial terms has been duly stigmatized, we may still fall very far short of an authentic intuition of time.’ Catherine Pickstock remarks: ‘Perhaps space, externality, and perception are not, after all, an inevitable void. An alternative phenomenology, such as that of Merleau-Ponty, might be one in which the act of perception is not cast as a totalizing, strategic gaze, but is, reciprocally, to *be perceived* and thereby displaced from self-presence...’ (Pickstock 1998, 107).

<sup>97</sup> Guerlac 2006, 63-64

<sup>98</sup> Cited in Ibid. 66

It is essential to the character of the melody that its notes are not all played simultaneously.<sup>99</sup> Its identity as a coherent temporal object depends upon the separation of its notes from each other and its extension in time, no less than my perception of a tree depends upon its extension in space, so that its component parts are not compressed into a single point of concentrated being. The melody is experienced as coherent and unified.

In explaining Merleau-Ponty's account of time, Komarine Romdenh-Romluc compares our experience of temporal objects such as a melody to our perception of three-dimensional objects.<sup>100</sup> We always perceive three dimensional objects from a particular perspective, never from all perspectives simultaneously. From any given location, aspects and parts of the three-dimensional objects that we perceive will be hidden from us. However, we do not only perceive 'a collection of flat, two-dimensional surfaces,' but spatially extended objects. Romdenh-Romluc writes:

It follows that their experiences must present them with the parts of things that are hidden from their gaze. The horizons of perception present them with the hidden parts of things, but they do so *implicitly*. Thus, when I look down on the table, I *explicitly* perceive the table top, whilst *implicitly* perceiving the legs, the surface underneath the table, the ground beneath it, and so on. The horizons present what is currently absent from the subject's gaze. The fact that this is presented *implicitly* allows the subject to experience it *as* currently absent.<sup>101</sup>

Our perception of time is similar in character. Like the 'horizons' of our spatial experience, our temporal experience has 'retentions' and 'protentions'—'retentions of previous experiences' and 'anticipations of future experiences'—as integral dimensions of the structure of present experience.<sup>102</sup> These are not the same as what we typically think of as memories or anticipations, which involve acts of recall or projection. Rather, retentions and protentions are perceptions of the *absence* of the past and future in the present, much as our perception of the table leg that is hidden from our vision. Our protentions and retentions are

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<sup>99</sup> Romdenh-Romluc 2011, 230. The turn to music to reawaken our sense of the phenomenology of time is worth noting. As I observed in the first chapter, it is in music that the character of time is most richly disclosed.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid. 229-233, 247-248

<sup>101</sup> Ibid. 229

<sup>102</sup> Ibid. 232

implicit presentations of what has been experienced and what will be experienced. The future and the past, though absent from this present moment, are also 'present' through their traces, our protentions and retentions.

This approach to understanding time helps to recover our sense of the unity and coherence of time and overcome our sense of time as successive discrete moments. Bergson and Merleau-Ponty's accounts of duration and coherence through time offer us a way to resist regarding typology as only formal analogies between discrete events, persons, or objects in time—a conclusion to which our spatialization of time tempts us—and, instead, to perceive a living unity through time.

The manner in which Bergson turns to participatory language in the context of his musical analogy in order to describe the sort of phenomena that Merleau-Ponty describes using the terms retention and protention is noteworthy. The notes are 'as if they were inside one another and their ensemble were like a living being whose parts, though distinct, interpenetrate through the very effect of their solidarity.'<sup>103</sup> We could 'conceive succession without distinction as a musical penetration, a solidarity, an intimate organization of elements of which each would be representative of the whole, indistinguishable from it, and would not isolate itself from the whole except for abstract thought.'<sup>104</sup> The language that Bergson employs here is revealing, as it captures the profoundly participatory character of the present when time is so conceived.

Recovering such an understanding of time is an important step on the road to recovering a scriptural understanding of typological realism. The past and the future are not realms of discrete moments closed off from the present, but horizons of our present experience. While the past may be *explicitly* absent, it exercises a profoundly powerful *implicit* presence. Our present is shot through with the traces of the absent past. The literary form of typology, with its echoes, allusions, motifs, and patterns, its subtle yet potent textual dance of presence and absence, is a very natural medium for conveying the character of temporal relations, with which it is remarkably homologous.

In moving to this understanding of time, one which is apt for participation, we open up the possibility of presenting the primary participatory relations

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<sup>103</sup> Cited in Guerlac 2006, 66

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

envisaged in the Christian faith in a more temporal manner. Returning to Farrow's remarks, in many respects our participation in Christ might be better understood within a more temporal framework. Christ is the forerunner, the pioneer, the one who has been perfected, the Man who has attained to humanity's full and mature stature, the firstfruits of the resurrection, the firstborn from the dead, the one who leads the way into God's future.<sup>105</sup> His achievement, as a once-for-all act in the past, comes to us from the past, yet also draws us into the future.<sup>106</sup>

Such a theological move would also, I believe, place the work of the Holy Spirit in sharper relief. The Holy Spirit is the wind behind our backs, as he drives God's past work into the present. He is also the 'slipstream' of Christ, the One who catches us up into the movement of the Man who has pioneered a way before us into God's future. Typology is where we can follow the coherence of the symphony of the Spirit throughout history—the symphony of which Christ is the unifying theme.

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<sup>105</sup> Christ's identity as the 'head' (κεφαλή) is commonly regarded as a metaphor that functions spatially. However, as Andrew Perriman notes, the term κεφαλή can also refer to temporal priority (Perriman 1998, 32). He writes of the use of κεφαλή in reference to Christ in Ephesians 4:15-16: 'When Christ is designated as 'head', therefore, the reference is not, in the first place, to his relation to the church as a body but to the process of growth in faith and understanding to the point where each believer is no longer susceptible to the trickery and error of human doctrine (v. 14). What Paul means in verse 15, therefore, is not that we should grow 'into him', as though to become united with him, but that we are to grow, as children grow towards adulthood, *towards* him, who is the head. The idea runs parallel to the thought in verse 13 about attaining 'to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ'. Christ as 'head', from this angle, is the model for Christian maturity.' Ibid. 46.

<sup>106</sup> N.T. Wright describes this simply yet powerfully in his wonderful introduction to the Eucharist: 'As often as you eat this bread,' said Paul, 'and drink this cup, you announce the Lord's death until he comes.' Held secure between past and future—God's past, God's future—we go forward on our journey strengthened and given hope. And between faith and hope we are given love, because we are given Jesus' own presence.' Wright 2002b, 58. Also, 'at every celebration of the Jesus-meal ... *God's past catches up with us again, and God's future comes to meet us once more.*' Ibid. 47, emphasis original.

# 6

## WHEN YOU PASS THROUGH THE WATERS

### From the Text to the Body

#### *1. Word Made Flesh*

Vanhoozer's doctrine of Scripture, I have argued, presents us with a solid foundation for an account of the sacraments that overcomes the language-being breach and directly relates typology to the efficacy of the sacraments. Before providing such an account, however, we had to begin by challenging Vanhoozer's own account of the sacraments on two fronts. First, for its failure to provide a sufficiently strong statement of the symbolic efficacy of the sacraments. Second, for its minimization of the role of the body. A further move that we had to make prior to advancing our account of typology and the sacraments was that of challenging prevailing understandings of the character of time, which atomize time, seemingly precluding the possibility of deep participation.

I have now laid out the principal elements of the picture that I want to present. As I place them together, it will become more apparent how they clarify our subject matter of baptism.

At the heart of the picture is the canonical text of Scripture. The word of Scripture is the active divine covenant word that grounds, authorizes, and authenticates the Church. The Scripture establishes various canonical practices, modes of action within specific social contexts. As a 'script' to be performed, it is not to be considered a closed deposit of truth standing apart from us, but a living,

world-creating text to be inhabited, which invites our performance under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

The Scriptures are marked by a ‘typological realism’. Typology reveals the integrated and coherent unity of history in Jesus Christ, enabling us to see the vast and variegated world of the Scriptures as a witness to him and to find ourselves within this world also, as persons in Christ. Furthermore, typology exposes the existence of a mode of participation operating through the medium of time.

The notion that scriptural typology is nothing but textual ornament, divorced from the substance of life, is a stubborn one and not easily unsettled. Rehearsing a number of key elements of my argument so far, it will become clearer why this is not the case.

First, reality is linguistically structured. Language does not stand opposed to being, but structures the universe into a ‘world’—a meaningful and ordered social reality.

Second, typology is irreducibly linguistic in character. It cannot be ascribed to some reality that stands apart from language.

Third, Scripture itself is one of God’s great acts, rather than a second order witness to acts that stand apart from it. One aspect of this action is the disclosure and institution of an order of relations between divine acts.

Fourth, the divine act of Scripture is inhabited through ‘canonical practices’ such as Vanhoozer describes. Enumerated among these canonical practices is figurative reading, by which we discern the structure of God’s great acts in the theo-drama and through which this structure orders our experience and acts also.

Fifth, there is an integral bond between canon and community. The canonical text establishes, authorizes, and forms the community of its readers. The typological structure and order of the text itself becomes enfleshed in the community.

In each of these ways, a tidy division between being and language, life and text is resisted.

Each of the statements above could be applied to typology and figural reading more generally as scriptural phenomena. However, *Christian* figural reading must go further and recognize that the typology of Scripture is ultimately

a witness to Christ and an address to his Church. As I emphasized in my second chapter, Christian figural reading finds its starting point and justification in the dominical mandate to read the Old Testament as a witness to the risen Christ, rather than in a more general formal claim about hermeneutics. Through figural reading we discover that the Logos of the Old Testament Scriptures and the whole creation—the Word, Wisdom, and Law of God<sup>1</sup>—is the One made flesh in the New. The entire Old Testament witness and, indeed, the whole world, finds its order and coherence in him.

The Scriptures, so understood, are ‘sacramental’ in character, a sacramentality that they enjoy on account of the fact that they present us with *figures*. Jean-Luc Marion, working within the framework provided by the Heideggerian philosophy that I described in my opening chapter, addresses the danger of the *idol*, whether physical or conceptual, which ‘consigns the divine to the measure of a human gaze.’<sup>2</sup> By contrast with the idol, the icon ‘does not result from a vision but provokes one.’<sup>3</sup> If the idol seeks to capture God within the realm of the visible, to present us with something upon which our gaze can fix within its own limits, to shrink God down to the scope of our comprehension, the icon operates by denying our gaze its mastery and our vision up to the invisible that lies beyond it, in whose scope we ourselves are located. Marion writes:

[T]o see, or to contemplate, the icon merely consists in traversing the depth that surfaces in the visibility of the face, in order to respond to the apocalypse where the invisible is made visible through a hermeneutic that can read in the visible the intention of the invisible. Contemplating the icon amounts to seeing the visible in the very manner by which the invisible that imparts itself therein envisages the visible—strictly, to exchanging our gaze for the gaze that iconistically envisages us. Thus, the accomplishment of the icon inverts, with a confounding phenomenological precision, the essential moments of the idol.<sup>4</sup>

There is a reversing of directionality here: rather than our eyes and minds reaching out to grasp and comprehend God, God must reveal himself—*give* himself to be known. This is an act of love, in which God traverses and establishes the difference between us and himself—love always requires

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<sup>1</sup> See the discussion in Keener 2003, 1:333-363

<sup>2</sup> Marion 1995, 14

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 17

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 21

difference—in the act of his self-bestowal. In this process the realm of our gaze is broken open to and by someone that exists beyond its constraints. Our eyes cannot fix upon the icon in the way that it fixes upon the idol, because the icon opens us up to the gaze of the Invisible.<sup>5</sup> The icon, like stained glass, renders visible the continual arrival of the gift of light beyond it. Stained glass is not a direct representation of the light, which would enable us to lock it within our gaze, but rather that which opens up our vision to the gift of the light beyond it, by which we can see and are seen (displacing the primacy of our vision). By maintaining the difference between itself and what it discloses, it retains its iconic character as a surface in and through which we can see depths.

Chauvet takes up the theme of the iconic character of the Scripture, cautioning against the temptation of seeking to airbrush the ‘resistance’ of the letter of the scriptural text: ‘the sacramentality of this Writing goes together with respect for the letter as letter, that is, with respect for its *concrete social and cultural delimitations*.’<sup>6</sup> Such a temptation arises from the desire to collapse the difference between the scriptural witness with the Spirit revealed in it. An appeal to a timeless ‘spiritual’ sense of the text can often efface the unwelcome particularity and contingency of the text that we are actually dealing with. Chauvet observes that readings of the Old Testament as a shadow and type of the full revelation of Christ can expose themselves to just such a danger, when they see in ‘the letter only the shadow projected by the full light which is yet to come.’<sup>7</sup>

The alternative to such an approach is to read Scripture *figurally*: ‘the figure converts memory into desire.’<sup>8</sup> Chauvet writes:

[T]he letter only arises as figure—and thus as a sacramental mediation of revelation—only *by splitting itself in two*: a witness to the “has been” of the creation, the Exodus, or the manna, it is at the same time a witness to the “must be” of a new creation, a new exodus, a new manna, and so forth. As figure, it is an *in-between*, a passage, a *transit toward something other than itself, something else which is the other side of itself*.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 20

<sup>6</sup> Chauvet 1995, 215, emphasis original.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. 218. While the term ‘figure’ lends itself primarily to spatial objects presented to our vision, scriptural figures are to be understood principally as *temporal* in character.



“The Jordan is the Jordan crossed by Joshua, then by Elijah; this is what it is for John the Baptist; and because of this, it awaits Jesus.”<sup>9</sup>

Chauvet suggests that the identity and difference between the two testaments is to be attended to at this point: ‘because the letter is always in transit (and this is true even within the Old Testament itself, as well as in its relation with the New), it takes on the *iconic status* of separation.’<sup>10</sup> The presence of God in the present is constantly suspended between historical memorial and eschatological hope, rather than offering itself in the manner of those religions that absorbed history and eschatology into the immediacy of cultic myths.<sup>11</sup> I discussed time as a medium of participation in my previous chapter. Christianity, by presenting salvific participation and revelation in a highly temporal and figural form, maintains a difference that must be traversed and resists idolatrous presence.

In my second chapter, I discussed the importance of recognizing and giving weight to the variations and developments between the uses of typological themes in various biblical texts. One of the reasons for my resistance to this approach should be more apparent now. In treating scriptural typology, there is a recurring temptation to distil the many particular and varying narratives to discover the one underlying archetype or ur-story, to escape the deferral of meaning entailed by historical rootedness and particularity and arrive at some pure presence. The theme, however, is only discovered through its many variations. Rather than abstracting discrete moments of history and treating them as direct typological images of Christ and his kingdom, we must relate to the type as a historical and temporal phenomenon. The type operates through the medium of time and history, and it always maintains the distance between it—and us—and that which it figures forth. Typology operates much as the developing motifs of a piece of music involve retention and protention, and evoke memory and anticipation.

The Word has been made flesh in Jesus Christ. The scriptural text is a figure of Christ, revealing him to be the Word of God. Like the two broken halves of the ancient *symbolon*, difference and separation are the preconditions for the

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., emphases original.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. 219

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. Schmemmann 1966, 106-110

possibility of mutual revelation as the identity of both is disclosed through their relation.

To this Christological understanding of Scripture we must connect an ecclesiological reading. The new covenant promise is that of the Law of God written on hearts instead of stones (Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:26), a reality that is accomplished in and through Christ and his Spirit. The writing of the covenant no longer stands over against us in judgment, but is being written into our flesh by the Spirit. In being established as the body of Christ, the Word is being enfleshed in us. Paul's argument in 2 Corinthians 3:1—4:6 develops out of just this truth.<sup>12</sup> The Spirit-breathed canonical text is animating embodied life in the Church, which was always its designed end, an end which was frustrated under the old covenant: 'in the new covenant incarnation eclipses inscription.'<sup>13</sup>

In 2 Corinthians 3:7-18, Paul provides a very powerful articulation of this development, one which also serves to clarify the position that the Scripture occupies within this new picture. Paul's discussion of the veil and the face of Moses is a subtle and multi-layered argument, which both articulates and exemplifies his position. Richard Hays' discussion of this is insightful and illuminating. He observes:

The rhetorical effect of 2 Cor. 3:16 is exquisite because it enacts an unveiling commensurate with the unveiling of which it speaks. The text performs its trope in the reader no less than in the story.... Moses' words are taken out of Exod. 34:34, unveiled, and released into a new semantic world where immediately they shine and speak on several metaphorical levels at once. Thus, rather than merely stating a hermeneutical theory about the role of Scripture in the new covenant, 2 Cor. 3:12-18 enacts and exemplifies the transfigured reading that is the result of reading with the aid of the Spirit.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> See Hays 1989, 122-153 for a stimulating discussion of this. He writes (Ibid. 29): 'In this eschatological community of the new covenant, scribes and professors will be useless, because *texts* will no longer be needful. Scripture will have become a "self-consuming artifact"; the power of the word will have subsumed itself into the life of the community, embodied itself without remainder.' This claim needs to be qualified by the insistence that this occurs only in Christ and by his Spirit, and that the ongoing process of writing the Scripture into the community, *which will not be completed in this age*, is grounded in the prior achievement of this in Christ's incarnation and the communication of this to us through means that are *extra nos*. Apart from such qualifications, we will find ourselves displacing Christ's centrality and will also find ourselves returning to some of the problems that Vanhoozer identified in Lindbeck's cultural-linguistic model.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 129

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. 147

Correlating to the difference between inscription and incarnation are two different ways of reading the text, illustrated in the metaphorical use of the narrative concerning Moses' veil. Moses' veil protected the Israelites from seeing his transfigured countenance and the glory of God reflected in it, the reality of transformed humanity that the covenant aimed at. Paul relates this to the veil that comes between Israel and the text of Scripture in their reading of it, preventing them from perceiving its *telos*.<sup>15</sup> However, just as Moses removed the veil when he turned to speak with YHWH, so those who 'turn' to the Lord in faith find that the veil over the text is removed in Christ:

For those who are fixated on the text as an end in itself ... the text remains veiled. But those who turn to the Lord are enabled to see through the text to its *telos*, its true aim. For them, the veil is removed, so that they, like Moses, are transfigured by the glory of God into the image of Jesus Christ, to whom Moses and the Law had always, in veiled fashion, pointed.<sup>16</sup>

This brings us back to my discussion of the difference between the idol and the icon, for is not the difference that Hays here describes the same difference as Marion discusses between the iconic and the idolatrous? Marion discusses 2 Corinthians 3:18 in the course of his argument:

[H]ere our gaze becomes the optical mirror of that at which it looks only by finding itself more radically looked at: we become a visible mirror of an invisible gaze that subverts us in the measure of its glory. The invisible summons us, 'face to face, person to person' (1 Cor. 13:12), through the painted visibility of its incarnation and the factual visibility of our flesh: no longer the visible idol as the invisible mirror of our gaze, but our face as the visible mirror of the invisible.... It transforms us in its glory by allowing this glory to shine on our face as its mirror—but a mirror consumed by that very glory, transfigured with invisibility, and by dint of being saturated beyond itself from that glory, becoming, strictly though imperfectly, the icon of it: visibility of the invisible as such.<sup>17</sup>

The figural and Christological reading of Scripture is thus also an 'iconic' reading of Scripture that is the means of the Church's transformation, as it both

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<sup>15</sup> Hays argues that we should interpret verse 13 as 'Moses put a veil on his face in order that the sons of Israel might not perceive the true aim of the transitory covenant' (ibid. 136).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. 137

<sup>17</sup> Marion 1995, 22

enfleshes the Scripture—incorporating the Scripture into itself—and as its body is conformed to the Scripture—being incorporated into the Scripture.

## **2. *The Body***

Earlier, in my criticisms of Vanhoozer's account of the sacraments, I emphasized the importance of the body. The body is that which embeds us in our *Lebenswelt*, the way in which we are inscribed into a social and political order, the ground of our imaginations and a *habitus*. Within the anthropology that I sketched in the previous chapter—following Smith, Merleau-Ponty, and Bourdieu—the privileging of the mental over the physical and the noncognitive was challenged. We will now return to reflect upon this point in more detail.

There is no language without a 'body'. This 'body' of language may be particular sounds, signs, symbols, or writing in various media.<sup>18</sup> As such, language is always mediated by that which is exterior. In attempts to overcome materiality and its associated mediation, the materiality of language itself will be minimized or resisted in various ways. As we typically associate language with the higher functions of humanity, it is tempting to present language as something elevated above the materiality of the natural order, an incorporeal and 'spiritual' reality. That there is no incorporeal language available to us can be a cause of metaphysical resentment.

The corporeality of language is its 'outsideness'. This outsideness of language is also connected to the social character of language, to the fact that meaning and our self-understanding and expression find their genesis in a realm of social and bodily interaction and engagement, rather than in a realm of private and solipsistic self-presence. The outsideness of language radically unsettles out Cartesian intuitions. We are inclined to think of ourselves as independent egos with unmediated self-presence, who venture outwards into the world.<sup>19</sup> Within this way of regarding the world, we are like 'hermits' in the heads of alien bodies.<sup>20</sup> Fergus Kerr writes:

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<sup>18</sup> Chauvet 1995, 141. Chauvet later refers to it as a 'subtle' body.

<sup>19</sup> See the discussion of this viewpoint in Kerr 1997, 3-27.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. 57

[T]he thought of the transcendent spirit inevitably brings with it a certain notion of the body as weighing down and trammelling it. From this it has been easy to conceive of the body as little more than a corpse that requires to be animated: the face becomes a veil, a mask that needs to be manipulated from behind, while the production of meaning retreats from the materiality of signs into the recesses of the invisible mind. In effect a metaphysically generated concept of the human body, derived from the thought of the immateriality and invisibility of the soul, displaces our experience of the whole living man or woman.<sup>21</sup>

This perspective is steadily dismantled and its ridiculous character exposed in the work of Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein demonstrates that language is rooted, not in internal self-presence, but in the ‘whole hurly-burly of our social-linguistic world.’<sup>22</sup> He remarks: ‘The human body, however, my body in particular, is a part of the world among others, among beasts, plants, stones, etc., etc.’<sup>23</sup> The position of Wittgenstein and other critics of the Cartesian perspective—not least among them Merleau-Ponty—turns a popular perspective upon ourselves on its head, representing something akin to a Copernican revolution in our understanding of the human subject. Rather than rooting the human subject in internal self-presence that is then expressed outwardly through the denigrated instrumentality of the body, the human being is rooted in a lifeworld, in its social and linguistic structure. Our ‘interiority’ is structured from the ‘exteriority’ of language, attained in the socio-linguistic world of physical and personal interactions, a world that displaces the ego from the centre of the universe. Once we have rejected the Cartesian perspective on the subject, the body will assume a much more important and elevated status. When the body is no longer reduced to the status of the demiurge of the incorporeal soul, we may discover that it is within the realm of bodily and social interactions that meaning and identity arise.<sup>24</sup>

While we often think of language as a means of expressing something ‘internal’ that exists anterior to it, language is in fact ‘the subject’s taking up a position within the world of its meanings.’<sup>25</sup> Chauvet observes: ‘Like language,

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 46

<sup>22</sup> Vanhoozer 2003, 32

<sup>23</sup> Cited in Kerr 1997, 27

<sup>24</sup> A wonderful exploration of this is found in Leon Kass’ *The Hungry Soul: Eating and the Perfecting of Our Nature*. Kass observes the ways in which our humanity can develop out of and find some of its most elevated expressions in the context of one of our most animal of acts: eating.

<sup>25</sup> Chauvet 1995, 146

the body is matter, matter significant from the first, that is, culturally instituted as speech.’<sup>26</sup> Our bodies embed us within the politics and life of a social and cultural order. As with our language more generally, the meaning of our bodies is not something that we craft from scratch, but is already established in many respects. We operate with tools worn in by much prior use. Our sex, our ethnicity, our skin colour, our bodily appearance and proportions, our physical capacities or disabilities: all are the bearers of meanings that pre-exist us and with which we must wrestle. Our bodies also embed us in very particular cultural and communal contexts, assigning us a position within a larger social structure.

The body, as such, is not just a blank slate through which to express our chosen meanings, but is always and already a site of meaning. My body is ‘made of the same flesh as the world’ and is ‘*the primordial place of every symbolic joining of the “inside” and the “outside”*’.<sup>27</sup> The body overcomes the dichotomy between subject and object by providing the middle space that binds my humanity and the world, self and other, internal and external, identity and difference, together under authority of the law of the symbolic order.

Chauvet observes that our basic schemata for processing and understanding reality proceed from the body’s form and life—‘the vertical scheme of above and below, the horizontal schemes of left and right (in space), of before and behind (in time as well as in space)’—and that even our most ‘elevated’ concepts are formed and coloured by this.<sup>28</sup> The language of posture, feeding, cleanliness and dirtiness, warmth and coldness pervades our thought and understanding, even at its highest levels, but is firmly rooted in the ‘*existential topography which is constitutive of the internal structure of the human being*’.<sup>29</sup>

The conceptual separation of the person from the body is popular, but misleading.<sup>30</sup> Chauvet quotes Nietzsche’s statement: ‘Body am I, entirely and

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. 147

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. 148. This is argued in even more detail in the work of Mark Johnson. See, for instance, Johnson 2008, 135-154.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. 149. Jonathan Haidt’s recent moral foundations work (Haidt 2013) is a thought-provoking argument in favour of the claim that our most refined ethical principles have developed from some basic bodily and social instincts.

<sup>30</sup> Roger Scruton has an interesting engagement with a specialized form of such a position, which he terms ‘Kantian feminism’ in Scruton 2006, 258ff. Sexual identity is perhaps one of the areas where any notion of the bodily determination of the person is most strenuously resisted. Scruton describes the Kantian feminist position as follows: ‘Although I am incarnate, my being so is, so to speak, the instrument of my ‘realisation’, in the public world of personal emotion. My personality

completely, and nothing besides.’<sup>31</sup> The body is not merely an attribute of the ‘I’: rather, the ‘body—in the third person—assumes the function of subject of a verb in the first person’ in a manner that undermines all attempts to establish some sort of intervening space between the two.<sup>32</sup>

The I-body exists only as woven, inhabited, spoken by this *triple body* of culture, tradition, and nature. This is what is implied by the concept of *corporality*: one’s own physical body certainly, but *as the place where* the triple body—social, ancestral, and cosmic—which makes up the subject is symbolically joined, in an original manner for each one of us according to the different forms of our desires.<sup>33</sup>

It is the body that connects me with—or is my having always-already been written into—the entire world of culture, nature, society, and language. It is impossible to express some transparent and pure internal presence apart from the body’s mediation. Through the body every word is subjected to a ‘writing’ external to the subject. Once this has been properly understood, the necessity and significance of addressing the body will become clear.

### 3. *Baptism*

I have argued for the primacy of the ‘external’: that language, culture, meaning, and identity come to us from without. The body, I have maintained, is the place where I am written into the world of culture, nature, and society. The body is the liminal region between self and other, subject and object, internal and external. By rejecting the Cartesian anthropology of the transcendental subject’s self-presence, the person is now no longer located in solipsistic self-possession, but is caught up in the ‘hurly-burly’ of the socio-linguistic world and its meanings. This rootedness is focused upon the body.

The embedded and embodied person needs sacraments for the realization of their identity in Christ. If the gospel does not claim us at the root of our

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is distinct from its bodily form, and is the true locus of my rights, my privileges, my values, my choices and—to use the Kantian term—my ‘freedom’. Features of my body, which distinguish my body from yours, cannot give reasonable ground for any judgement as to my nature as a person.’ Ibid. 258.

<sup>31</sup> Chauvet 1995, 149

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. 150

being—in our embedded embodiedness—it does not truly claim us. If the gospel does not act upon our social substance, providing us with a new social body, embedding and writing our personal bodies into it, it has not truly delivered us. Without the gift of sacraments our salvation would fall short of being realized.

In baptism, our bodies are inscribed into a new socio-linguistic order. We are baptized into Christ, brought into the social body and symbolic order of the Church. This is a new ‘birth’, an event through which we receive a new embodied identity, and an event that marks a radical new beginning for the subject. As I argued above, referencing Bourdieu, in baptism, the body of the baptized person is ‘co-opted’ by the social body.

It is also through the sacraments that the Church’s own existence is realized. As Augustine recognized, a religious society cannot exist without visible symbols or sacraments.<sup>34</sup> Through baptism, the Church is established and formed as a visible society within the world. Baptism—a rite performed upon Jews and Greeks, slave and free, male and female, a watery rite of inclusion, rather than the bloody rite of excision involved in circumcision—implies a certain form of political and social order within the Church.<sup>35</sup> Each baptism of an individual person is simultaneously a recapitulation of the Church’s *own* Pentecostal origin: ‘For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.’<sup>36</sup>

The symbolic efficacy of baptism, which I discussed earlier, can be related to the points that I have just made about the body and anthropology. Resistance to the symbolic efficacy of baptism often arises from the Cartesian prejudices discussed above: baptism must be the external expression of some internal meaning of the self-present subject. Where the appropriate internal intention of faith is lacking, the external action cannot have its intended meaning or effect. Such objections often surface in resistance to infant baptism.<sup>37</sup> The fact that symbolic efficacy is principally grounded in the operation of the external socio-linguistic order, rather than in meaning internal to the individual, opens up the

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<sup>34</sup> *Contra Faustum* 19.11

<sup>35</sup> Peter Leithart argues that baptism overturns the old ‘hierarchical’ social order of graded holiness (Leithart 2003a, 203ff.).

<sup>36</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:13

<sup>37</sup> See Leithart 2007a, 113ff.



possibility of a baptismal identity truly being given to us, whether or not we determine to live out of it.

Referring to Paul's reasoning in 2 Corinthians 3, I argued that the new covenant involves a movement from inscription to incarnation, incarnation first and climactically realized in Christ and then, through him, in his body, the Church. Baptism is crucial to this movement from book to body.<sup>38</sup> It is the point where our bodies are claimed as the place of this writing.

At the heart of my thesis is the claim that the rite of Christian baptism is typologically related to the crossing of the Red Sea and that, in a rich variety of ways, it evokes the Exodus motif that pervades both Old and New Testaments. It is thus a rite that mobilizes a great narrative. As this typology is enacted upon our bodies, we are placed into the rich symphony of the theo-drama. Baptism is also baptism *into Christ*, the one to whom all of the Scriptures bear witness. Our baptismal union with Christ involves an entrance into his story, and is a union that is effected by the Spirit through the medium of time, history, and narrative.

It is a fact of considerable import that baptism is *not* an artificial or arbitrary form of initiation rite, but that it is, as Daniélou observed, a rite that possesses an intense scriptural and typological redolence. It is the richly typological character of the rite of baptism that makes it so apt for initiating us into and situating us within the world of the scriptural narrative. Where baptism is viewed principally as the outward expression of the believer's internal commitment, this truth may be in danger of neglect.

That baptism effects the passage from the Scripture to the *body* is perhaps the fact with the greatest significance here. The newly baptized person is written into the theo-drama, whether or not they understand how or that this is taking place. Baptism is not in the first instance a ritual theatre performed for the mind of the convert, but rather a ritual symbolically effecting a new identity. This new identity is established as a fact to be explored—the fact of a new rootedness in the canonical community, where the text makes its passage into the body. The typological connections between the event of the Christian's baptism and the scriptural narrative are not primarily contingent upon a cognitively informed recognition of and consequent response to their designed existence, but rather are

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<sup>38</sup> Chauvet 1995, 263-265

an effected reality that should evoke an appropriate response. In baptism the Scripture has claimed us as the site of its passage into flesh, whether we understand this or not.

#### ***4. Baptism and the Reading of the Scriptures***

This connection between typology and baptism is an important one. Through baptism, typology moves from being a feature of texts to becoming a defining characteristic of the community formed by the canonical text. The transition effected through baptism is thus a transition that transforms our relationship to the text itself. To this point this thesis has focused upon the manner in which the rite of baptism develops out of an extensive body of typological themes in the Scriptures. However, baptism also serves as the condition of possibility for a particular form of typology. By writing us into the text it renders us the objects of the typology of the text, something that is demonstrated in scriptures such as 1 Corinthians 10:11: ‘Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come.’

By writing us into itself, the Scripture also establishes us as its readers and performers in a community and tradition of interpretation. Baptism is a means by which the text creates and authorizes its own readers. Brought forth from the matrix of the Scriptures in baptism, we are both commissioned as the executors of the divine testament and identified as the heirs (cf. Galatians 3:26-28).<sup>39</sup> Baptism establishes us in a very particular relationship with the text: we read the text from within.

The practice of typological reading of the Scriptures does not find its deepest rationale in general theories of hermeneutics, but in the testamental identification of the body of Christ as the executors and heirs of the Scriptures

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<sup>39</sup> Chauvet emphasizes the inseparable connection between the text and its readers. He discusses the constitution of the text by its readership and the manner in which the readership writes itself into the text (Chauvet 1995, 208-209). It is at this point that Chauvet’s resistance to *sola scriptura* is most pronounced. The directionality implied in his statements must be attended to. My concern here is to stress that the principal movement is from *text to readership*: the Scripture constitutes its readership and the Scripture writes its readers into it. It is appropriate to speak, as Chauvet does, of the Scripture as a ‘testament’, a writing that is left behind for others to carry out. However, Chauvet lacks a sufficiently robust account of the manner in which the testament identifies its executors and heirs.

through the rite of baptism. As the heirs of the testament, the riches of the text are given with us in mind. We are its addressees, the true seed in Christ: 'For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.'<sup>40</sup> We are also the executors, the authorized community of interpretation, who exist in a unique relationship with the text. Of God's will, he has brought us forth by the word of truth as the Church of the firstborn (cf. James 1:18; Hebrews 12:23). As the readers of the Word, we are also its creatures.

The intended reading of the Scriptures is an *ecclesial* reading. The Church's reading of the text is privileged over other possible readings. This is the case because the Church reads the Scripture as an authorized actor in the theo-drama. It is also the case on account of the particular eschatological vantage point that it enjoys in Christ. Richard Hays writes:

*If we learned from Paul how to read Scripture, we would read as participants in the eschatological drama of redemption....* Through interpreting Scripture, we locate our present time in relation to the story of God's dealing with humankind. Paul believed that his stance at the turn of the ages gave him a warrant for his radically revisionary readings because it gave him a privileged perspective from which to discern the thematic unity of time past and future.<sup>41</sup>

Hays goes on to remark that the normative role accorded to historical criticism in the hermeneutics of many Christians represents a retreat from the eschatological confidence that informed Paul's readings.<sup>42</sup> The central principle of Hays' approach is the pneumatologically empowered and eschatologically situated 'imaginative freedom' of the Church in relation to the text. In terms of the hermeneutical positions outlined in my third chapter, I adopt a position in which much greater weight is given to the Old Testament pole of our readings. Hays and I share an emphasis upon our privileged vantage point as readers of the canonical Scriptures. However, where his position focuses upon imaginative *freedom*, mine focuses upon the themes of *revelation*, *inspiration*, and *authorization*.

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<sup>40</sup> Romans 15:4

<sup>41</sup> Hays 1989, 185

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

Hays' 'freedom' suggests latitude afforded to us in the creative act of interpretation and a corresponding degree of autonomy granted to us. In contrast to this, my position rests upon our receipt of revelation in Christ, which unveils the unifying principle of all of the canonical Scriptures, the Spirit's inspiration and granting of wisdom and insight to the Church as a community of readers, and the authorization of the Church through Word and Sacrament. The principle of freedom at the heart of Hays' approach plays upon a liberty-slavery opposition: 'We are children of the Word, not prisoners.'<sup>43</sup> Yet such freedom is a double-edged sword. The person who is freed by authority in their interpretation may be at liberty to read more imaginatively. However, the resulting readings lack authority. *Authorized* readers, by contrast, *because* they remain under authority also *enjoy* authority in their readings.<sup>44</sup> In rejecting the liberty-slavery opposition that Hays suggests, I replace it with a hermeneutic for which our figural readings can find strong authorization through the typological realism of the Scriptures, the dominical mandate to find Christ in the Scriptures, and our baptized status as the Spirit-empowered executors and heirs of the new covenant. On the other hand, however, in founding my case on the ground of authorization, I also maintain the necessity of the public demonstration of and a conversation concerning the warrant for our readings.

### 5. *The Pedagogy of Baptism*

In the discussion to this point, I have principally focused upon the objective symbolic efficacy of baptism, the socio-symbolic order into which it initiates us, and the typological realism of the canonical text into which we are written. In my concern to maintain the objective efficacy of the sacrament and the general primacy of the 'external', the body, and the noncognitive dimensions of our being, I have said relatively little about the character of the formation that I envision.

However, the passage from the text to the body of which I have spoken could not achieve its full effect apart from means of formation and pedagogy. The time of our baptism marks the outset of a journey, rather than its completion. The

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid. 189

<sup>44</sup> That being *authorized* also entails being *under authority* is well expressed in the words of the centurion to Jesus in Luke 7:8.

new identity into which we have been initiated through baptism is one that must be worked out in us over the rest of our lives. The question of how the rite of baptism relates to this pedagogical process is one to which I must now turn.

On the grounds of typological realism and the efficacy of baptism as a public performative speech act, I have maintained that the bond that baptism establishes between us and the theo-drama is a socio-symbolic reality, not ultimately contingent upon our response. However, our response to God's gracious action in baptism *is* a matter of considerable significance. The non-occurrence of the expected response to the rite of baptism can precipitate a symbolic crisis in the Church, akin to the crisis that occurs in a society where the symbols and rites of royalty cease to be recognized or honoured or the crisis that occurs in families where adopted children grow up to reject their adoptive parents.<sup>45</sup>

Bringing about the deep enculturation or socialization of the baptized person into a sanctified life within the Church is the heart of the intended perlocutionary effect of the practice of baptism. Where baptism routinely fails in this end, a crisis in the socio-symbolic order of the Church can result. Any account of baptism that does not address this in detail is failing in its task.

Alongside our liturgical practices, we also need to develop a healthy liturgical piety. The issue of liturgical piety will be taken up in more detail in the chapter that follows, as I reflect upon examples of baptismal teaching and practice from the early Church. However, in the course of the rest of the discussion that follows in this chapter, it will emerge on several occasions.

In speaking of liturgical piety, we are recognizing that the practice of the sacraments and the liturgy by themselves is not sufficient to ensure their appropriate reception, but must be complemented by an appreciation of the sort of thing that the liturgy and the sacraments are and the proper manner in which we should approach them. Mark Searle argued that the rites of the liturgy are primarily directed at the imagination, but that an exclusive fixation upon the images and practices of the liturgy themselves, and a consequent failure to reflect upon the role played by the imagination itself, has led to the failure of various

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<sup>45</sup> As I have already observed, the intended perlocutionary effect of baptism involves a response, not only in the candidate, but also in the Church and society more generally. Not only should the baptismal candidate start to live and think of themselves differently, others should treat them differently.

projects of liturgical renewal.<sup>46</sup> Our pedagogy must guide us, among other things, into a fitting liturgical piety, an appropriate posture in the practice and reception of the liturgy and sacraments.

### 5.1 A Pedagogy of the Word

Baptism, I have argued, places us within the theo-drama. It constitutes and authorizes us as the heirs and executors of the testaments of Scripture. The rite of baptism itself is one that is drawn from deep wells of biblical symbolism and typology. We emerge from the womb of baptism as children of the Scriptures.

Such a gracious gift of a new status has as its intended perlocutionary effect our appreciation of and entrance into the full and faithful exercise of the privileges granted. Where such a response is lacking, the sacrament has not achieved its goal. The sacrament is never ambivalent towards our response. Although the sacrament may prove to be a cause of judgment for us, its blessed character is predicated upon the perlocutionary effect that it intends. The Apostle Paul can speak of unworthy partakers in the Eucharist being judged in Corinth, yet the cup retains its character as the ‘cup of blessing’ (τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας).<sup>47</sup>

The performative speech act of baptism grants us the full privileges and status of the children of God and joint heirs with Christ. It places us within a new relationship with God and gives us a principal part to play in the theo-drama. As such, the promissory character of baptism must be highlighted. As in the case of adoption—to which, following Kurt Stasiak, I have compared baptism<sup>48</sup>—baptism is a gracious act by which we given title to privileges to be enjoyed from that point into the future. We face the danger of accenting the retrospective dimension of baptism—deliverance from a previous state of sin, alienation, and judgment—to the neglect of the prospective force of the new standing which we now enjoy.

This neglect has perhaps been particularly exposed in historic debates surrounding the possibility and manner of the forgiveness of post-baptismal sin.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Koester & Searle 2004, 127

<sup>47</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:27-34

<sup>48</sup> Stasiak 1996, 132-140

<sup>49</sup> Ferguson 2009, 216-217, 506

Where the prospective and promissory force of baptism has been obscured, although baptism may wipe our slate clean, subsequent sin is cast as a radical threat to our standing with God, which could be forfeited. Baptism is an initial act of repentance and forgiveness. However, as baptism can only be granted once, those who have lapsed after baptism have dwindling chances for forgiveness open to them. Where remission of past sins served as the dominating frame for baptism, this could also lead to the counsel to delay baptism, and resistance to the practice of the baptism of young children, such as we encounter in Tertullian.<sup>50</sup>

One of the most powerful theologies of the promissory and prospective force of baptism—a theology that addresses the problem of post-baptismal sin head on—is encountered in the work of Martin Luther. Jonathan Trigg has highlighted Martin Luther’s resistance to the ‘linear model’ of the Christian life, characterized by conversion connected with baptism, followed by progress beyond that point.<sup>51</sup> In a sharp departure from this model, Luther maintained that we never move beyond the point of baptism. Conversion is not a past event, but a status that we persevere in, by constantly returning to our baptisms.<sup>52</sup> Conversion is an ongoing reality in the Christian’s life, a continual act of going back to the beginning. Baptism also declares death and resurrection, a reality that has yet to be fully accomplished in us.<sup>53</sup> Consequently, the entirety of existence as baptized Christians is lived in the space between promise and consummation. The primary theme of Luther’s doctrine is the ‘present tense’ of baptism.<sup>54</sup> Trigg writes:

[T]he ‘beginning’ to which the Christian is continually recalled is baptism. At the trysting place of baptism, God addresses me with his word of promise. I must live from moment to moment by faith in that word, never daring to rely on a past conversion, or to progress in empirical righteousness, although tempted to do so. To yield to that temptation would be to abandon the despised trysting place of baptism in the search for a glory of my own.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Tertullian, *On Baptism* 18, *On Repentance* 6. Notice that forgiveness for post-baptismal sin occurs through a ‘second repentance’ (*On Repentance* 7).

<sup>51</sup> Trigg 1994, 166-169

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. 170

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. 202

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. 171

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

The baptismal promise is an ‘unsinkable ship’, remaining in force throughout our lives.<sup>56</sup> The light of hope that baptism holds out to desperate sinners neither gutters nor dims. However far the prodigal has wandered from home, he can always recall the promissory declaration of his baptismal adoption and return to his Father’s house, assured of a ready welcome.<sup>57</sup>

Teaching concerning baptism has typically been directed primarily at baptismal candidates. Without dismissing the importance of such preparatory teaching, recognizing with Luther the ‘present tense’ of baptism, I believe that teaching concerning baptism ought primarily to be addressed to those who have already been baptized.

Baptism, I have argued, is the point where the Scripture co-opts our bodies and writes us into the theo-drama. It is the beginning to which Christian pedagogy must always return, addressing us as those who, whether we yet realize it or not, have been placed in a very particular role in the drama. ‘Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?’<sup>58</sup>

The divine word of baptism established us in a particular identity. The typology and symbolism of baptism does not chiefly exist to promote a sense of elevated mystery in the minds of those who are baptized. Edward Yarnold speaks of ‘awe-inspiring rites of initiation’ designed to produce a profound experience, ‘calculated to sink into the depths of the candidate’s psyche and to produce a lasting transformation there.’<sup>59</sup> The transformation that Yarnold describes is quite different from that which I am discussing. The perlocutionary effect intended by baptism is not primarily achieved through the awe of the event—the baptisms described in Scripture are typically simple and unembellished affairs—but through the lifelong process of conversion, whereby we continually return to the beginning that baptism marks. Likewise, the symbolism and typology of the rite are not displayed chiefly through elaborate form and pomp that saturate the senses, but through the word of the Scriptures to the ear. The perlocutionary effect is not that we would feel an awe provoked by the ceremony, but that we would come to live out and to understand what we have been granted.

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid. 202

<sup>57</sup> Jensen 2012, 60-62 discusses the use of the theme of adoption in relation to baptism in early Christianity. See also Burnish 1985, 81-82.

<sup>58</sup> Romans 6:3

<sup>59</sup> Yarnold 1994, x



The portion of the symbolism and typology of baptism that is made visible to the senses in the form of the rite itself, while worthy of our attention, is but the tip of the iceberg. By far the greater part of the typology and symbolism of baptism must be drawn out by the word, the word encountered in the reading of Scripture and preaching. This symbolism exists, not for the purpose of awe-inspiring ritual theatre, but to disclose the relation to the world of the Scriptures into which baptism brings us.

The typology of Christian baptism that is the subject of this thesis is not ornamental, existing in order to craft symbolically elaborate rites, but rather traces our scriptural patrimony as baptized Christians and marks us out as heirs and executors of the new testament. The power of our baptisms resides chiefly in the enduring fact that we have been baptized, not in our actual experience of the event. As the adopted child must constantly return to the fact of his adoption, so the Christian must constantly recall his baptism and the promise that it represents.

In repeatedly connecting the teaching of the Scriptures to the fact of our baptism, the Church's teaching reinforces the fact that we have been established as participants in the theo-drama and inhabitants of the world of the Scriptures, that the Scriptures are a word of direct address to us, and that we are the authorized community of its interpretation. Such a form of pedagogy would require a lot more typological preaching and extensive acquaintance with the Scriptures.<sup>60</sup> In baptism, our identity and calling as Christians comes forth from the full-flowing waters of the biblical text. It is only as we trace those waters back, back to their sources and tributaries, that we will discover who we are and where to go next. The process of continual return to the Scriptures through our baptism and to our baptism through the Scriptures is the primary means by which the passage of the word to the body is realized.

The typology of Christian baptism that I have identified in the last few chapters—just one dimension of the larger typology of baptism—could not be condensed into a simple 'meaning' or 'definition'.<sup>61</sup> Nor need the baptismal candidate appreciate such typology prior to baptism. Rather, the typological roots of our identity as baptized Christians should be a theme to which Christian preaching and other forms of pedagogy continually return. It is a recurring

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<sup>60</sup> Leithart 2003b, 18-24

<sup>61</sup> Koester & Searle 2004, 135

summons to enter more fully into the vast world of the Scriptures into which baptism plunges us and to persevere in hope of the promise that God there extended to us.

## **5.2 A Pedagogy of the Body**

In responding to Vanhoozer's account of the sacraments earlier, I emphasized the importance of the body. In the argument that has followed, however, the body has featured primarily to emphasize the priority of the fact of baptism and its socio-symbolic efficacy over our understanding of its meanings. Having previously remarked upon James K.A. Smith's discussion of the pedagogical significance of the body and the primacy of the precognitive body and the imagination that develops out of that, it would be appropriate to revisit this theme.

Smith's insistence that the liturgy is directed at the embodied imagination can be found in others who have preceded him. Searle eloquently expresses the importance of ritual:

By putting us through the same paces over and over again, ritual rehearses us in certain kinds of interaction over and over again, until the ego finally gives up its phrenetic desire to be in charge and lets the Spirit take over.... The texts of Scripture and the images of the liturgy are not didactic messages wrapped up in some decorative covering which can be thrown away when the content is extracted. They are images and sets of images to be toyed with, befriended, rubbed over and over again, until, gradually and sporadically, they yield flashes of insight and encounter with the "Reality" of which they sing. Their purpose is not to give rise to thought (at least, not immediately), but to mediate encounter. As Heidegger said in another context: "The point is not to listen to a series of propositions, but to follow the movement of showing."<sup>62</sup>

In speaking of images and symbols, Searle is not restricting his remarks to those things that are presented to the *eyes* of the faithful, but also to their bodily actions. For instance, he observes that 'kneeling ... is not an expression of our humanity: it is more an invitation to discover what reality looks like when we put ourselves in that position.'<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid. 133

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

Baptism does not seem to lend itself as readily as the Eucharist and other elements of the liturgy to such a manner of learning. In contrast to these, baptism is typically only performed upon a person's body once in the course of their life and, in many such cases, the baptismal candidate may be too young to be conscious of what is occurring to them. When Searle speaks of a 'rehearsal of attitudes, a repeated befriending of images and symbols, so that they penetrate more and more deeply into our inner self and make us, or remake us, in their own image,'<sup>64</sup> this would seem to exclude baptism.

Nonetheless, even rituals that are performed only once can powerfully address the embodied imagination. Let us look at various ways in which baptism can do this.

### *5.2.1 Water: the Ritual Element*

The multiple forms and beauties of water make it impossible for us to express simply or comprehensively the meaning of water for our lives. We can merely gesture towards some of the many ways in which our relationships and encounters with water shape us, preserve us and are significant to us. In employing the element of water, baptism explores dimensions of water's profound and varied primal symbolism for us as human beings.

Water possesses immediate and pronounced bodily associations with life and death. Water is essential to our life: we cannot survive without drinking for more than a few days. It is also essential for our food supply. Rain, especially in an agricultural society, is an unpredictable blessing that livelihoods and even survival depends upon. Unsurprisingly, it can be closely associated with divine provision and gift. On the other hand, being engulfed by water represents the threat of death by drowning. Water, in the form of the dark abyss, the flood, the torrent, and the tumultuous ocean hold dangers and terrors.

Water is a primal element, powerfully and instinctively associated with birth, with life, and with death. In water we encounter what is arguably the most fundamental element of nature's phenomenological presence to us. In Genesis 1, the world is formed out of water: the deep is divided into waters above and below and the waters below are divided into seas and land. An instinctive sense that it is

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

in the dynamic forms of water that nature's face is most clearly visible is common to many of us as human beings.<sup>65</sup> Tertullian writes:

[W]ater alone—always a perfect, gladsome, simple material substance, pure in itself—supplied a worthy vehicle to God. What of the fact that the waters were in some way the regulating powers by which the disposition of the world thenceforward was constituted by God? For the suspension of the celestial firmament in the midst He caused by “dividing the waters;” the suspension of “the dry land” He accomplished by “separating the waters.” After the world had been hereupon set in order through its elements, when inhabitants were given it, “the waters” were the first to receive the precept “to bring forth living creatures.” Water was the first to produce that which had life, that it might be no wonder in baptism if waters know how to give life.<sup>66</sup>

The association between water and the bringing forth of life that Tertullian identifies here is present in baptism, which is a washing of rebirth. Remarking upon the design of some ancient fonts, Robin Jensen observes:

The font water was not only a cleansing substance but also a symbol of the amniotic fluid in the mother's womb. The newly baptized emerged from this womb wet and naked, just like infants coming out of their mother's body. Like those newly born children, they were immediately wrapped (swaddled) in white garments.<sup>67</sup>

A further dimension of water's natural symbolism for the embodied imagination is found in its capacity to represent the transferral of properties or agency. Anders Klostergaard Petersen writes:

[W]ater has the great advantage that by being sprinkled upon either human beings, animals or artefacts [it] can trigger mental representations about agency transference, i.e. the water can somehow be attributed the role of conveying substances from one element to another. To the extent that the water is accorded the role of conveying magical agency it may be used in a ritual context to transfer the magical substance upon the ritual participants.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> The significance given to ‘living water’ in such texts as the *Didache* is worthy of note in this regard. ‘The valuation of different kinds of water is another indication of the Jewish environment of the *Didache*. Running water was called “living” because it had motion. Such water was the appropriate place for an act that imparted life (spiritual).’ Ferguson 2009, 204.

<sup>66</sup> Tertullian, *On Baptism* 3

<sup>67</sup> Jensen 2012, 165

<sup>68</sup> Hellholm, Vegge, Norderval, & Hellholm 2011, 11

In Old and New Testament, water can represent the bestowal of the Spirit, which is ‘poured out’ upon the Church on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17-18). In the rite of baptism the blessing of the Spirit can be represented as coming upon a person in such a manner.

The connection between water and cleansing is also familiar to us and is something that operates at a very instinctual and bodily level. The connection between sin and dirt is one established in the bodily imagination. People are more likely to feel a need to wash themselves after reflecting upon their sins.<sup>69</sup> Jonathan Haidt has observed the deep relation between our embodied cleanliness instincts and our moral instincts:

[T]here’s a two-way street between our bodies and our righteous minds. Immorality makes us feel physically dirty, and cleansing ourselves can sometimes make us more concerned about guarding our moral purity. In one of the most bizarre demonstrations of this effect, Eric Helzer and David Pizarro asked students at Cornell University to fill out surveys about their political attitudes while standing near (or far from) a hand sanitizer dispenser. Those told to stand near the sanitizer became temporarily more conservative.<sup>70</sup>

The connection between baptism and the remission of sins is thus very naturally drawn.<sup>71</sup>

A further feature of water is its unitive and undifferentiating character. Water is an undifferentiated medium that other bodies can enter and be connected to each other in a more pronounced fashion than outside of it. Water can surround the body and take the body into itself, dissolving the separations that exist between bodies: ‘For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free...’<sup>72</sup>

### 5.2.2 *Baptismal Orientations*

The rite of baptism, as it has frequently been practiced, involves a number of movements of water and bodies in particular directions, movements which are

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<sup>69</sup> Haidt 2013, 71

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. 71-72

<sup>71</sup> Robin Jensen discusses the symbolism of baptism as cleansing from sin and sickness in detail in Jensen 2012, 7-51.

<sup>72</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:13a

generally invested with significance. Persons *go down into* the water, and they *rise up from*, or are *brought up out of* it. In some cases, persons pass *through* the water. The liminality of the waters of baptism—their importance as a boundary that must be crossed or traversed to move from one realm to another—can be highlighted in such a manner.

The placement of water in relation to the baptismal candidate can be significant. In some cases water falls from above, in others water surrounds the candidate and they descend into it. Sometimes both water above and water below are present. Within baptism and its preparatory rites an ‘orientation’ away from the west and towards the east has also often been a significant feature.

Baptism involves a negotiation of space, symbolically reorienting the baptismal candidate. It is the place where the body of the convert is given its new bearings. This can be reflected in the architecture of baptisteries and fonts, in the choreography of the rite, and the movements of water in relation to bodies.

Mark Johnson has written about the way in which our ‘image schemas’ emerge from the body.<sup>73</sup> Concepts emerge from the structures of embodied imagination. An example of baptism’s use of such an ‘image schema’ can be found in the body’s descent into and ascent from the waters of baptism. As Johnson observes:

Because we exist within a gravitational field at the earth’s surface, and because of our ability to stand erect, we give great significance to standing up, rising, and falling down. Our understanding of these bodily experiences involves a VERTICALITY (UP-DOWN) schema and a BALANCE schema.<sup>74</sup>

Descent is associated with humbling ourselves or being ‘lowered’ in status or power. We are ‘abased’. It is also movement in the direction of death. By contrast, we ‘ascend’ to a ‘higher’ status, or to more ‘elevated’ realities. Our natural relation to the divine employs this verticality schema: within our embodied world schema, God is in the heavens—above us.

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<sup>73</sup> Johnson 2008, 135ff.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. 137

The verticality schema that Johnson discusses is also evoked by the location of the water relative to our bodies. Descent down into the water is associated with descent into the grave. Basil of Caesarea writes:

How then do we achieve the descent into hell? When we imitate the burial of Christ through baptism. For the bodies of those who are being baptized are, as it were, buried in the water. So the Lord, who gives us life, has entrusted to us the covenant of baptism, which contains a type of death and life: the water fulfills the image of death, and the Spirit gives the earnest of life.... On the one hand, the water supplies the image of death when it receives the body like a tomb, and, on the other, the Spirit infuses life-giving power, when he restores our souls from a state of deadness, which was the result of sin, to the life [which they possessed] in the beginning.<sup>75</sup>

In contrast to the water of the grave into which we descend,<sup>76</sup> water that descends upon us from above has a more natural association with the blessing of rain, or with the bestowal of gift the Spirit upon the candidate. Everett Ferguson maintains that the mode of baptism in the early Church was ‘immersion with exceptions.’<sup>77</sup> This immersion, he argues, involved full submersion of the body:

The express statements in the literary sources, supported by other hints, the depictions in art, and the very presence of specially built baptismal fonts, along with their size and shape, indicate that the normal procedure was for the administrator with his head on the baptizand’s head to bend the upper part of the body forward and dip the head under the water. Whether the person was standing, kneeling or sitting may have varied in different instances, but in the art the one baptized is standing.<sup>78</sup>

Ferguson challenges the theory of Eduard Stommel, who argued for pouring rather than submersion as the normal mode of baptism. However, while Ferguson regards it as ‘largely conjectural,’ he writes that ‘the only viable alternative interpretation of the evidence that would account for the fonts is a partial immersion in which the baptismal candidate stood in water and the

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<sup>75</sup> Cited in Haykin 1986, 139.

<sup>76</sup> We should not simply presume that descent into the water refers to submersion. It could refer to descent into the body of water or font. For instance, in Acts 8:38-39 *both* Philip and the eunuch go down into the water and come up out of it, rather than the eunuch alone.

<sup>77</sup> Ferguson 2009, 857

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. 857-858

administrator poured water over the upper part of the body.’<sup>79</sup> He later suggests the hypothetical possibility that this practice—partial immersion with pouring—functioned as the missing link between the practice of submersion and pouring alone.<sup>80</sup> Robin Jensen discusses the ambiguous and conflicting evidence of the iconography, archaeology, and literature relating to the mode of baptism.<sup>81</sup>

Based on available documents, historians have sometimes assumed that baptism was usually accomplished by full immersion—or submersion—of the body (dunking)... Many—if not most—surviving baptismal fonts are too shallow to have allowed submersion. In addition, a significant number of depictions show baptismal water being poured over the candidate’s head (affusion)... Representations that lack an overhead water source normally show the recipient standing ankle-deep in a running stream. The depth shown in these images does not preclude submersion of the recipient’s head and body, but it does not show it.<sup>82</sup>

In addition to the representations of sprinkling or pouring within iconography, Jensen draws attention to references to the practice in such places as Gregory of Nyssa’s catechetical orations.<sup>83</sup> Perhaps especially interesting about the Gregory of Nyssa reference is the fact that it occurs in the context of a description of baptism as descent into water and triune immersion.<sup>84</sup>

The first chapter of this thesis opened with a description of Schmemann’s objections to the separation of the form of the ritual of baptism from the dogmatic teaching concerning the rite and the substitution of a dogmatic preoccupation with ‘validity’ for the symbolic integrity of an epiphanic rite. This is one example of a context where Schmemann’s concerns are very relevant. Discussions of the mode of baptism have a direct bearing upon the way that the rite relates to our embodied image schemas. Baptism by affusion, baptism by submersion, and baptism by descent into a partially submerged state, accompanied by the pouring out or

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid. 858

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. 859n6

<sup>81</sup> Jensen 2011, 136-142. See Howard Marshall’s discussion of the mode of baptism in Porter & Cross 2002, 8-24.

<sup>82</sup> Jensen 2011, 137

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. 138. Gregory of Nyssa, *Great Catechetical Oration*, 35.

<sup>84</sup> *Great Catechetical Oration*, 35. Cross & Livingstone 2005, 827, describes immersion as ‘a method of Baptism, employed at least from the 2nd cent., whereby part of the candidate’s body was submerged in the baptismal water which was poured over the remainder.... The term is occasionally loosely used to include submersion, from which it is strictly to be distinguished.’



sprinkling of water from above, all evoke different meanings for our embodied imaginations.

### 5.2.3 Transition

Baptism involves a passage from one state and realm into another, a passage that occurs through the waters of baptism. While this passage is chiefly a *symbolic* transition accomplished by the entirety of the baptismal ritual, rather than a passage from one physical location to another, this passage can also be registered on a more bodily level. Water is frequently encountered in the form of a boundary. We ‘cross over’ water to get to another side, the water functioning as the dividing line or liminal region between two realms.

The performance of baptismal rites frequently involves a movement *through* water. Within the broader bodily itineraries of the rites, this movement represents the climactic transition. Physical transitions and passage through liminal realms can produce a psychological effect. Psychology has identified the ‘doorway effect’, whereby the simple process of walking through a door from one room to another (even in a virtual environment) can cause us to forget things.<sup>85</sup> Crossing a boundary between two locations can lead to the purging of the ‘event models’ that were associated with the location from which we have moved. If baptism involves passage through a watery ‘boundary’, it would not be surprising if the theological and symbolic passage of baptism were accompanied by an embodied sense of a resetting of our ‘event models,’ strengthening our experience of a psychological break with our former lives of sin. As the spiritual and socio-symbolic movement of the subject is enacted through the physical passage of the body through water, the bodily significance of movement through a liminal boundary between two realms grounds and reinforces the transition that is occurring.

## 5.3 A Dramatic Pedagogy

In addressing Vanhoozer’s discussion of baptism, I cautioned against an understanding of the sacraments that places its primary accent upon the sacraments as ritual theatre directed at the understanding of ‘spectators’. At a later

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<sup>85</sup> See, for instance, Radvansky, Krawietz, & Tamplin 2011.

point in this chapter I also argued against any approach that would locate the purpose of the typology and symbolism of baptism chiefly in the creation and elucidation of a dramatic and ‘awe-inspiring’ rite. In its essential form, the rite of baptism is incredibly simple. The accretion of superfluous symbolism that a dramatic rite can encourage risks obscuring the fundamental simplicity of the rite.<sup>86</sup>

The fact that baptism is typically only performed upon us once, yet is probably an action that we will witness on many occasions over the course of our lives, does place us in position more akin to that of spectators. Yet our spectation is not a detached spectation, for we are called to play the more active role of *witnesses* and our appropriate response is also a dimension of the perlocutionary intent of the rite: part of the purpose of rite is that we should recognize and treat the newly baptized persons as members of the body, drawing them into and training them within the life of the Church.

I have already identified some of the sociological and political dimensions of the practice of baptism and have discussed the manner in which the Church’s own Pentecostal origin is re-presented and recapitulated at the baptism of every Christian. In this re-presentation, we are recurrently put in mind of the origins and form of our identity, both as the Church and as individual members of it. While, as I have noted, we do not experience baptism as a repeated rite from the perspective of candidates, upon whose body the rite is performed, we do experience it in this repeated fashion as witnesses. For these reasons, even though it is not the primary purpose of the rite, the relationship between the dramatic form of the ritual and the pedagogy of the Church—both of those being baptized and those witnessing—is a matter of some importance and merits our attention.

In my observations about the pedagogy of baptism as a pedagogy of the *word*, it was the conceptual and theological significance of baptism that took centre stage. On the other hand, in speaking of the pedagogy of the *body*, it was the immediate effect that the performance of the rite has upon the embodied imagination that was central. However, in adopting such an approach, I have opened myself up to the charge that I polarize body and mind, with our pedagogy addressing each in detachment from the other. Schmemmann’s emphasis upon the

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<sup>86</sup> Leithart 2003a, 135-142; Schmemmann 1966, 106, 108

significance of the *form* of baptism, a significance that he explores at length in *Of Water and the Spirit*, is a necessary antidote to this potential error. It is through such an emphasis that we can maintain that the pedagogy of the body is of one piece with the pedagogy of the mind through the word: it is the form of baptism itself that mediates between the two. The form of baptism plays a principal role in the passage of the word from the text into the body. The form of baptism conforms us to the Scriptures and to the Christ to whom they bear witness and prepares us to bear their meanings, ploughing the soil of the body so that the seed of the Word can bear its fruit.

Searle expresses a related concern to that of Schmemmann when he complains about ‘our preoccupation with teaching people the meaning of things.’<sup>87</sup> This preoccupation can lead to teaching upon the sacraments that pays no attention to the actual form of their practice, as Schmemmann recognized. Searle identifies a further danger of this preoccupation:

[W]e have a survival of the idea that images are merely the wrappings of “truth” and that they can be dispensed with, explained in other terms and then reintroduced as illustrations of the teacher’s remarks. It is an exact parallel to, and perhaps a symptom of, the understanding of metaphor which regarded it merely as a decorative rhetorical device.<sup>88</sup>

Characteristic of this attitude towards the images and rituals of the liturgy is a denigration of the place of the symbol. This denigration is in part a result of a literalistic impulse, which either over-identifies sign and signified, collapsing the difference between the two in an almost magical association, or sharply resists any sort of identification.<sup>89</sup> On account of this literalistic impulse, we are inclined to search for a univocal meaning to the rite, either strongly identifying the sign and the signified in a magical fashion, or forcefully dissociating them, in a ‘this is not that!’ fashion.<sup>90</sup> Both approaches can yield an indifference towards the form of the ritual. In the first, the form of the sign is overwhelmed by the presence of the signified. In the second, the form of the sign becomes a bare ‘external’ illustration of an ‘internal’ reality.

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<sup>87</sup> Koester & Searle 2004, 134

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. 134-135

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. 129-130

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. 130, 134

Like Schmemmann, Searle seeks to counter both of these approaches through the recovery of the epiphanic character of the symbol. He illustrates the position that he is advocating by arguing that we should emulate the example of the fourth and fifth century Fathers, who maintained the ‘indispensability’ and even ‘priority’ of the image in the manner of their teaching on the sacraments.<sup>91</sup>

Their preaching was not an explanation of what the rites meant, but a commentary on the experiences of the neophytes. Far from defining the meaning of the Eucharist and baptism, they multiplied the associations evoked by the ritual and prayer, showing how the image opens on to a larger world of reality than meets our eye or ear. The role of preaching and catechesis today must be the same: practical demonstrations of how, by befriending the image—whether it be word or gesture, or even the congregation itself—and by working with it lovingly, it will yield a glimpse of the world invisible, a snatch of the song of the angels and saints, a momentary awareness of myself and the grocer as one Body, one Spirit in Christ.<sup>92</sup>

The multivalence of the symbol and the form of the rite of baptism cannot be sufficiently stressed. Typology reveals the meaning of the rite precisely by multiplying associations in such a manner.<sup>93</sup> The association of baptism with the Red Sea crossing, for instance, is not where we will locate a final ‘meaning’ of baptism, but is just one particularly prominent dimension of the biblical typology of the rite, coexisting with various others.

It is important to reiterate here that baptism is not so much a static image as it is a ritual movement and a drama: the ‘form’ of baptism is a dramatic structure and sequence. As such, there are stages to it and the symbolic change and epiphany that its effects are unfolded by means of an action through time.<sup>94</sup> As a ritual, the temporal dimension is heightened in its significance. Ritual manifests its truths differently from articulated concepts. In my opening chapter, I spoke of the sacraments as *itineraries*, cautioning against collapsing them into synchronic

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid. 135

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> This may an argument for the relative simplicity of the rites. The more elaborate the symbolism of our rituals, the more that we may risk over-determining the rite’s meaning, committing ourselves to the ritual embellishment of one dimension of the rite’s symbolism to the effacement of others. For instance, were we to reform our liturgy of baptism to underline the connection between it and the Red Sea crossing, a connection to which I have devoted much of this thesis, we would risk obscuring the connections between baptism and the creation, the Flood, the womb, the baptism and the death of Christ, and various other typological dimensions.

<sup>94</sup> McCall 2007, 84

symbolic functions. It is a process of passage, a ritual enactment over a period of time, which makes possible the change in the subject's position in the socio-symbolic order. The examples that I will give of the pedagogy of the baptismal rite in what follows will be examples of ritual *movements*, not static images.

Preaching and catechesis take their starting point in the form and the fact of baptism, in the physical actions of the ritual, the various speech acts associated with it, and the reality it establishes through its symbolic efficacy, and uncover some of the deep scriptural associations that they evoke. It establishes Scripture as the resonance chamber of the rite. Throughout this process, the instituted ritual itself must retain its priority. The ritual effects and manifests the reality of our rootedness in the theo-drama. Consequently, it cannot be displaced or substituted for by any explanation: baptism is constitutive of our identity, while the teaching is explicative of this.

I will conclude this chapter with some examples of ways in which catechesis and preaching can bring together the physical form of the sacrament with its typological significance, ensuring that typology does not float like oil on the waters of baptism.

### 5.3.1 *Descent and Ascent*

The verticality schema that I highlighted earlier can be related to baptismal typology, not least to the Red Sea crossing event. The Red Sea crossing is a 'descent' into the deep. This theme enjoyed especial prominence within the early Church's practice and understanding of baptism, and was even reflected in the design of fonts.<sup>95</sup> Per Lundberg studies the theme of Christ's descent into hell and defeat of Satan, in connection with the early Church's baptismal rites. Observing the importance that Psalm 74:13 has in this relation, he stresses the theme of conflict with the dragon and descent into the realm of death.<sup>96</sup> This theme is largely eclipsed in the Pauline corpus,<sup>97</sup> so many of its canonical

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<sup>95</sup> Many early fonts were sunken into the ground and had steps, even when not necessary for the functionality of the font, which were assigned symbolic importance. Stauffer 1994, 11.

<sup>96</sup> This theme surfaces in several baptismal liturgies. See, for instance, Whitaker 1970, 59.

<sup>97</sup> Paul speaks of Christ's death and resurrection in more passive terms; Lundberg argues that Paul's mode of expression 'exclut toute activité de la part de Christ dans l'Hadès' and departs from the Christian tradition that preceded him. Lundberg 1942, 226.

underpinnings are drawn more directly from the Old Testament, the Red Sea crossing being one important typological paradigm.

Quoting Aphrahat and an Epiphany hymn of Cosmas of Jerusalem, Lundberg illustrates the way that primitive Church writers employed the biblical imagery of the Red Sea crossing as an exposing of the hidden foundations of the world.<sup>98</sup> The Red Sea serves as an image of the Abyss, an image of Christ bringing the demons down to Hades through baptism.<sup>99</sup> Pseudo-Eusebius wrote: ‘He did not think that as he [Christ] made Pharaoh and his army to drown in the sea, so also he would lead him [the devil] down with his demons into the Gehenna of fire through baptism.’<sup>100</sup> Origen writes:

These [spiritual evils] attempt to follow, but you descend into the water and come out unimpaired, the filth of sins having been washed away. You ascend “a new man” [Eph. 2:15; 4:24] prepared to “sing a new song” [Isa. 42:10]. But the Egyptians who follow you are drowned in the abyss.<sup>101</sup>

In the Red Sea crossing the demons descend to the Abyss, and a path of ascent is opened to the Israelites.<sup>102</sup> The theme of ascent is a recurring one in connection with water deliverances in the Old Testament.<sup>103</sup> With regard to the Red Sea crossing, it can be seen to relate to the overarching theme of ascent that governs the Exodus—being ‘brought up’ out of Egypt—but also in particular references, such as that to being planted in the mountain of YHWH’s inheritance in the Song of the Sea (Exodus 15:17) and the Isaianic reference to Israel being brought up out of the sea (Isaiah 63:11), with its allusions to God’s original acts of creation. These function as figures of baptism, which serves as a means of ascent, even as it consigns the demons to the abyss. Severus of Antioch writes: ‘He wished by his baptism to open before us an ascent leading to heaven and to lay in advance a sure foundation for the gift of adoption and to bring the Holy Spirit upon flesh and to crush the head of the evil one, the suprasensual serpent,

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<sup>98</sup> Lundberg 1942, 121-122

<sup>99</sup> Cf. Young, Edwards, & Parvis 2006, 129-130. An association between Hades and the depths of the Red Sea may also be suggested in such places as 1 Clement 51:4-5.

<sup>100</sup> Cited by Everett Ferguson in Young, Edwards, & Parvis 2006, 129-130

<sup>101</sup> Cited in Ferguson 2009, 402

<sup>102</sup> Lundberg 1942, 11

<sup>103</sup> The ark of Noah being deposited upon the high mountain of Ararat (Genesis 8:4), the drawing of Moses out of the water (Exodus 2:10), the ascent of Elijah to heaven after crossing the Jordan (2 Kings 2:8-11), etc.

upon the waters; whom also he once through Pharaoh and his chariots figuratively drowned in the depths of the Red Sea.<sup>104</sup>

Baptism's significance in terms of a verticality schema is also manifest in the distinction between two sources of water in Paul's description of the event in 1 Corinthians 10: in addition to passing 'through the sea', the Israelites were also 'under the cloud' (ὕπὸ τῇ νεφέλῃ). While the cloud and the sea are associated and are both watery elements, there also seems to be a distinction between them, corresponding in part to that between the waters above and the waters below in Genesis 1.<sup>105</sup> In contrast to the sea, the cloud is seen to involve the divine presence and possibly also a fiery dimension.<sup>106</sup> The symbolism of the water in connection with baptism has two distinct aspects.<sup>107</sup>

### 5.3.2 *Passage*

The Red Sea crossing, as the name of the event suggests, involves more than a descent and ascent: it is primarily a passage through. As with the themes of descent and ascent, the theme of passage is reflected in the design of the earliest Christian fonts and baptisteries. Most of the earliest baptismal fonts in the West had steps on two or more sides, and the rite would have involved a passage through the water from one side of the font to another, quite possibly a reference to the typology of the Red Sea crossing.<sup>108</sup>

This theme of passage, less clearly present within New Testament baptismal references, draws more immediately upon the background of the Old

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<sup>104</sup> Cited in Lundberg 1942, 11

<sup>105</sup> A distinction between the waters of blessing above and the waters of the deep and judgment below might also be seen in the contrast between the imagery of the threatening waters of the flood and the rainbow in the cloud that followed it (Genesis 9:12-17), and that between the 'waters from below' of the 'baptism' of Jesus's death and the 'waters from above' in the baptism of the Church with the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost. The notion that the cloud and the sea are merely designed to indicate the presence of water on all sides as an image of submersion seems to be insufficient (*pace* Dunn 1998, 448).

<sup>106</sup> Davidson 1981, 202; Kline 1968, 68-70. Michael Haykin observes of Basil of Caesarea's understanding: 'The sea speaks of death: for the Israelites the death of their enemy, Pharaoh; for the Christians the death of their enmity towards God and freedom from the deadly tyranny of the devil. The cloud, on the other hand, was a sign of God's presence among the Israelites and thus foreshadowed the gift of the Spirit, who is imparted to the believer in baptism.' Haykin 1986, 138. Leithart suggests a possible connection with the pattern of the sacrifices, where 'the washing is immediately followed by a transfiguration into cloud' (Leithart 2009; cf. Leithart 2006a, 176 where he connects this to the baptisms and ascensions of Elijah and Jesus).

<sup>107</sup> In commenting on 1 Corinthians 10:1-2, various early Church writers connected the cloud with the baptism of the Spirit (Bray 1999, 89).

<sup>108</sup> Stauffer 1994, 11

Testament, especially that provided by the Red Sea crossing. In speaking of the ‘mode’ of Israel’s baptism into Moses in 1 Corinthians 10:1, Paul writes that they ‘passed through’ the sea (διὰ τῆς θαλάσσης διήλθον). Ambrose remarks:

What could be more extraordinary than this, that the Jewish people passed through the midst of the sea? And yet all the Jews who made that passage died in the desert. But he who passes through the waters of this font—that is, from earthly things to heavenly—he who passes through these waters does not die: he rises again.<sup>109</sup>

Augustine also,

No other thing was it that there in figure the passage of that people through the sea foreshowed, than the passing of the Faithful through Baptism; the apostle is witness: for “I would not have you ignorant, brethren,” he said, “that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.” Nothing else then the passing through the sea did signify, but the Sacrament of the baptized; nothing else the pursuing Egyptians, but the multitude of past sins. Ye see most evident mysteries. The Egyptians press, they urge; so then sins follow close, but no farther than to the water.<sup>110</sup>

The spiritual identity of Israel was defined relative to the bodies of water that surrounded it and by key water crossings in its history. Their fathers served other gods on the far side of ‘the River’ (Joshua 24:2). The identity of ‘Israel’ was given to Jacob at the ford of Jabbok (Genesis 32:22-32). The Red Sea marked the final separation between Israel and Egypt. The crossing of the Jordan marked the entrance into the Promised Land. These boundaries were not merely physical boundaries of the nation of Israel, but were also constitutive of its spiritual identity. David Garland stresses the significance of the Red Sea as a separation and boundary in this context:

The sea marked the permanent boundary between Israel and Egypt.... Israel’s deliverance through the sea marked the beginning of their separation from Egypt and their new identity as God’s covenant community, and the term “baptism” fittingly represents that experience.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Ambrose, *On the Sacraments*, 1:12

<sup>110</sup> Augustine, *Explanation of the Psalms* 81:8

<sup>111</sup> Garland 2003, 451



Just as the typology of Scripture cannot be abstracted from the literary form of the text, so the typology of baptism cannot be abstracted from the form of the rite.

## ***6. Conclusion***

The previous chapter began with a reminder of the issue that this thesis sought to address, the challenge of producing a doctrine of baptism that addresses Schmemmann and Daniélou's concerns that the doctrine of baptism has become detached from the form of the ritual of the sacrament and the typology of Scripture respectively. Building upon the foundation laid by the previous four chapters, I have articulated an account of baptism for which typology is integral. I have also demonstrated the significance of the form of baptism and its connection with typology.

Within the following chapter I will look at examples of the ways in which the connection between the Red Sea crossing and baptism was taught and presented in the Church of the fourth and fifth centuries.

# 7

## ALL OUR FATHERS

### Crossing Typology in Early Church Baptismal Theology and Practice

The significance of the typology of the Red Sea crossing was widely appreciated within the Church of the first four centuries. Within this chapter I will study some of the ways in which this typology was present in its teaching and practice. I will explore the integration of this typology into baptismal liturgies and catechesis, especially focusing upon Cyril of Jerusalem, Zeno of Verona, and John Chrysostom.

#### *1. Exodus Typology in the Church of the First Five Centuries*

The profile enjoyed by Red Sea crossing typology will not be adequately understood apart from an appreciation of the significance of the Exodus within the early Church. I have already identified the prominence of Exodus typology within the text of the New Testament, where it functions as a primary paradigm for understanding the salvation accomplished by Christ. On account of the importance of Exodus typology as a lens for understanding Christ's work, it should not be surprising that the typological significance of baptism is often articulated within such a framework.

Allegorical readings of the story of the Exodus, which we encounter among the Alexandrian Fathers, as a pattern of the Christian life were influenced by Philo's *Life of Moses*. Within Philo's reading, the Exodus from Egypt

functioned as an allegory of the movement from the world of the body to that of the mind.<sup>1</sup> The drowned Egyptians represent the passions, and the unleavened bread represents leaving these behind in Egypt.<sup>2</sup> In such readings, the scriptural accounts of the Exodus and the wilderness journey were transposed into accounts of the stations of the soul on its journey to perfection.<sup>3</sup> The etymology of the place names would be mined for spiritual significance. For Philo, ‘Mara’ meant bitterness, while ‘Elim’ referred to the ‘gateways’ to virtue.<sup>4</sup>

Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Gregory of Nyssa provide us with examples of early Christian attempts to integrate such Philonic allegorical exegesis with the Church’s more traditional typological exegesis of the Exodus and to develop Philo’s approach in a distinctively Christian direction.<sup>5</sup> Numerous details within the Exodus narrative were given an allegorical meaning. For Origen, males symbolize reason and thought, while women symbolize the flesh and passions. Pharaoh—a symbol of this world—desires to put to death the Israelite infants, because he abhors spiritual reason.<sup>6</sup> At many other points, Christian meanings come to the fore: Pharaoh’s daughter is a type of the Church, the rock and manna of Christ.<sup>7</sup> For Gregory of Nyssa, the burning bush is Mary: ‘From this we learn also the mystery of the Virgin: The light of divinity which through birth shone from her into human life did not consume the burning bush, even as the flower of her virginity was not withered by giving birth.’<sup>8</sup>

Such elaborate Alexandrian allegory had its critics in the Antiochan school. F.G. McLeod observes of Theodore of Mopsuestia:

While adamantly opposed to an allegorical interpretation of a scriptural passage, he did concede a spiritual meaning could be discerned there. He was convinced that God’s will is revealed through a literal exegesis of a passage. However, he recognized that God could foresee and contrive that at times a real relationship exists between two historical persons or events. He insisted, nevertheless, that this relationship had to be

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<sup>1</sup> Daniélou 1960, 208

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 209

<sup>3</sup> Hanson 2002, 254

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. The bitterness of Marah, for Origen, related to the unpleasantness of virtue to the sensual man, while the tree that sweetened the waters was a symbol of love, the desire for immortality. Daniélou 1960, 209.

<sup>5</sup> Daniélou 1960, 217

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 219

<sup>7</sup> Daniélou 1960, 224-225

<sup>8</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Moses* 1.21

confirmed by a New Testament passage.... Being approved and inspired, these types and archetypes could be used to illumine the meanings of each other as will be seen in the case of image. If, however, neither of these poles were grounded in reality, Theodore considered such an instance to be an allegorical interpretation spun out of one's vivid imagination.<sup>9</sup>

Even an exegete with such stringent criteria for the admission of types had to acknowledge the appropriateness of some form of Exodus typology on account of its confirmation in the New Testament. The surprise, in light of Theodore's characteristic exegetical circumspection and minimalist instincts, is how fully he embraced Exodus typology in his commentary on 1 Corinthians 10. McLeod writes:

Theodore, then, regards Moses as a type of Christ the Savior and adds in his commentary elements not found in the present Scripture passage but mentioned in other places: the wand becoming a type of the cross, Pharaoh becoming a type of the devil, the Egyptians becoming a type of the demons, the manna becoming a type of divine nourishment, the water from the rock becoming a type of partaking of the divine mysteries through baptism. All these types, and their antitypes, are historical realities. They resemble their realities in recognizable ways sanctioned by Scripture. They have been foreordained by God, who is the One who assures that they will be fulfilled.<sup>10</sup>

Those demurring at the allegorical excesses of the Alexandrians still recognized the importance of Exodus typology as sanctioned and articulated by Scripture. Advancing a strong relation between the Exodus and the experience of the Church should not be regarded as a peculiarity of the allegorists, but as a more general position among early Christians. While it could be significantly embellished, or maintained in a more restrained fashion, the fundamental correspondence of the Exodus with Christ's salvation of his people arises from the text of the New Testament itself.

Cyril of Jerusalem wrote of the parallels between the events of the Exodus and the experience of the Church:

There Moses was sent by God into Egypt; here Christ was sent from the Father into the world. Moses' mission was to lead out of Egypt a

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<sup>9</sup> McLeod 2000, 452

<sup>10</sup> McLeod 2005, 51-52

persecuted people; Christ's was to rescue all the people of the world who were under the tyranny of sin. There the blood of a lamb was the charm against the destroyer; here, the blood of the unspotted Lamb, Jesus Christ, is appointed your inviolable sanctuary against demons.<sup>11</sup>

Such a typology of the Exodus enjoyed a privileged place in the life of the Church from the outset. This prominence arose in no small measure to the fact that it was such a strongly ritualized, instituted, and scripturally confirmed typology. Most particularly in his institution of the Supper, Christ related his salvation both in timing and in meaning to the celebration of the Passover. By establishing the Passover as the context for his saving action, Christ placed the typology of the Exodus and Passover at the heart of the understanding of the Church. The Supper functions as a sign of the continuity and conformity of Christ's salvation with God's salvation of his people in the Old Testament, of Christ's fulfilment of the promised second exodus, and of the anticipation of final consummation in the eschatological kingdom of God.

### 1.1 The Christian Passover

The precise origin of the Christian celebration of Pascha is uncertain. Thomas Talley suggests that its observance developed as a 'gradual modulation of the Passover as it continued to be observed by the primitive community' rather than a Christian feast created *de novo*.<sup>12</sup> The earliest textual evidence of the practice dates from the second half of the second century and refers to a vigil followed concluded by a commemoration.<sup>13</sup> Talley's theory that the Quartodeciman Pasch was the oldest form of Easter celebration, rather than a Sunday celebration of the resurrection around Passover time, would strengthen the connection between the two celebrations, ensuring that their correlation was not merely regarded as occasional. Paul Bradshaw observes that this theory would imply that 'the primary focus of the oldest celebration was on 'Christ, the paschal lamb, sacrificed for us' rather than upon the resurrection.'<sup>14</sup>

Together with the weekly celebration of the resurrection on a Sunday, the Easter-Pentecost cycle functioned as the backbone of the Church year.

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<sup>11</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem, *Mystagogical Lecture* I 1.3

<sup>12</sup> Talley 1986, 5

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 5-6. The text in question appears to allude to the events of Acts 12.

<sup>14</sup> Bradshaw 1992, 195

Schmemmann has argued that the Church preserved the Jewish 'liturgy of time' yet brought it into correspondence with its eschatological fulfilment:

If the Church preserved these two festivals of the old Israel [Easter and Pentecost], even when the idea of their consummation in Christ saturated the whole of her life, then this was because she preserved that theology of time of which they were the expression.... In the Messiah they acquire their whole meaning, and also a new goal: the ultimate cosmic victory of the Kingdom is already manifested in the Messiah. For this reason the Christian Passover is the same Passover of the chosen people of God, the Passover of the Exodus and of deliverance from bondage, the Passover of the desert, the Passover of the coming into a promised land. To this Passover as a series of events there was added yet one more meaning, the final one, including all the others: "Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us."<sup>15</sup>

The centrality of the Christian Passover within the Church year ensured that the eschatology of the Kingdom was recognized as the fulfilment of time, rather than an irruption that cut across it.

Pascha and Sunday were often related celebrations. As Talley observes, the characteristic celebration of the Eucharist on Sunday 'established from the outset a close correspondence between the content of that day's celebration and that of the annual Pascha.'<sup>16</sup> Once again, the original character of the relationship is partially contingent upon our interpretation of the Quartodeciman controversy, for the designation of Sunday as a 'little Easter' and Pascha as the 'Great Sunday' runs against Quartodeciman practice.<sup>17</sup> Talley conjectures that the paschal fast developed from the fasting associated with Passover.<sup>18</sup> However, for Christians this Passover fast was 'extended through the hours of the rejoicing accompanying Passover, past the midnight conclusion of that festival.'<sup>19</sup>

Notwithstanding the unclear origins and early development of the connections between Passover and the Christian celebration of Paschal Triduum, the relationships between the two become increasingly pronounced over the first few centuries of the Church. In some measure on account of these, Pascha comes

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<sup>15</sup> Schmemmann 1966, 87

<sup>16</sup> Talley 1986, 16

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. 27

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

to occupy a central position within the Church year and imagination, drawing much into its orbit.

At the heart of the celebration of Pascha was the Triduum, the period of three days moving from the evening of Maundy Thursday to the evening of Easter Sunday, commemorating the betrayal, trials, crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of Christ.<sup>20</sup> From this core, a fuller celebration of Pascha developed, one extending to the entirety of Holy Week and including the period of Lent beforehand.

## ***2. Baptism and the Red Sea Crossing***

The Red Sea crossing is not merely related to the Church's practice of baptism by means of second-order theological reflection, but also within the Church's own life, worship, and liturgy. In addition to commentaries and theological works, evidence of a connection can be traced through the prayers of the baptismal rite, its structure, texts, and readings, its specific ritual actions, the symbolic geography of the rite, baptismal sermons, hymns, iconography, architecture, the place given to Exodus 14-15 and other related passages in the lectionary, and the practice of baptism in relation to the Church's calendar.

Despite the widespread use of Red Sea crossing typology, its appropriation, function, and significance in the context of the rite and theology of baptism is neither constant nor consistent. In some cases it is most noticeable by its absence. The elements of the typology that attract attention and the manner and extent to which they are employed both within baptismal rites and theological reflections upon them vary widely. The typology is frequently clearly tailored to clothe existing practices and theologies, while there are other occasions when it possibly has exerted a more determinative effect upon the shape and meaning of the rite. One of the questions that we must bring to this study concerns the degree to which Red Sea crossing symbolism is regarded as essential and intrinsic to the meaning of particular baptismal rites, informing them, as opposed to merely reflecting the baptismal theology, or providing illustrative typological or allegorical parallels.

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<sup>20</sup> Farwell 2005, 39

Within this study of baptismal symbolism and Red Sea crossing typology a more fundamental issue emerges. It is within the practice of the sacraments—perhaps more than anywhere else—that people’s lives can be placed in relation to the narrative and symbolic world of the biblical texts. Baptism is the point at which the watercourses of individual biography, Church history, and biblical narrative generally converge, and much can be learnt from studying what occurs at the confluence of these streams. The manner in which Red Sea crossing and other typologies function in relation to baptismal rites exposes many of the convictions that constitute the hermeneutical posture of traditions in relation to the biblical texts, and to the Old Testament in particular.

As I have already discussed, the application of the pattern of the Exodus to the spiritual journey of the convert can be seen in the work of Origen and other Alexandrian theologians. While Origen can speak of both events as ‘baptisms’, in Origen’s employment of the pattern, it is the crossing of the Jordan that principally corresponds to baptism, while the earlier crossing of the Red Sea corresponds to the entering of the catechuminate.<sup>21</sup> The Exodus, the wilderness wanderings, and the entry into Canaan were important reservoirs of baptismal typology in the early Church. In addition to the Red Sea crossing, events such as the sweetened waters of Marah,<sup>22</sup> the waters of Elim,<sup>23</sup> the rock which gave water when struck,<sup>24</sup> and the crossing of the Jordan under Joshua<sup>25</sup> were also related to baptism.<sup>26</sup>

A connection of baptism with the Red Sea crossing is witnessed by such as Tertullian:

[I]ndeed, when the people, set unconditionally free, escaped the violence of the Egyptian king by crossing over through water, it was water that extinguished the king himself, with his entire forces. What figure more manifestly fulfilled in the sacrament of baptism? The nations are set

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<sup>21</sup> Ferguson 2009, 402-403. In Origen’s homilies on Joshua, he articulates the more common understanding of the relationship between the crossing and baptism: ‘Thus it is fitting, after the parting of the Red Sea, that is, after the grace of baptism, for the carnal vices of our old habits to be removed from us by means of our Lord Jesus, so that we can be free from the Egyptian reproaches [Josh. 5.9].’

<sup>22</sup> Daniélou 1960, 170-171

<sup>23</sup> Justin Martyr, *Dialogue* 86; Lienhard 2001, 84

<sup>24</sup> Daniélou 1960, 195; Ferguson 2009, 114; Tertullian, *On Baptism* 9; Lienhard 2001, 83-84

<sup>25</sup> Daniélou 1960, 261ff.

<sup>26</sup> Ferguson 2009, 246 lists some of the possible allusions to baptism that scholars have found in Melito of Sardis’ *On Pascha*.



free from the world by means of water, to wit: and the devil, their old tyrant, they leave quite behind, overwhelmed in the water.<sup>27</sup>

Daniélou remarks upon the curious absence of the baptismal typology of the Exodus in texts giving the teaching of the Didascalia and in various other early Church texts. From this he reasons:

We reach the conclusion, then, that the typology of Baptism does not belong to the personal teaching of the Didascalia, or the opinions of any particular school, but is part of the official catechesis given by the *magisterium* of the Church. It is then the living tradition of the Church herself. And we shall meet this theme in the bishops and expounders of the Faith, the authorized guardians of tradition. This is specially noticeable in those writings which reflect the catechetical instructions. It seems so much bound up with this form of instruction that it is not often found in writings which do not directly belong to it; even if coming from hierarchical authority.<sup>28</sup>

From such core typological identifications, typology expands outwards to encompass various other aspects of the narratives. Justin Martyr and others relate Moses' rod to the cross of Christ.<sup>29</sup> The same expansion of the symbolism can be witnessed within baptismal rites themselves, as various surrounding and accompanying elements of the ritual are explained in terms of the fundamental typology.<sup>30</sup>

Anita Stauffer remarks upon the fact that most early Western Christian fonts had 'steps on at least two sides, perhaps enabling the candidate to experience passage through the water from the old life to the new.'<sup>31</sup> Stauffer also observes that fonts were designed to facilitate the symbolically significant bodily movement of descent and ascent, relating the baptismal candidate to Christ in his burial. Descent and ascent, as I have already argued, is also an important

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<sup>27</sup> Tertullian, *On Baptism* 9

<sup>28</sup> Daniélou 1960, 177

<sup>29</sup> Justin Martyr, *Dialogue* 86, 138. In the later reference, the connection between water, wood, and faith in salvation is especially clear. See also Augustine, *On Catechizing the Uninstructed* 20:34, where he speaks of Moses' rod as a manifestation of the 'sacrament of the wood' at the Red Sea crossing. Ephrem the Syrian makes the same connection (Elliott 2007, 256). Daniélou 1964, 81-82 notes the striking connection that Gregory of Nyssa draws between the divine chariot and the drowning of the chariots and horsemen of Egypt at the Red Sea.

<sup>30</sup> Two examples of this are the likening of pre-baptismal anointing to the protection of the Israelite firstborn through the blood placed on the lintels of the doors at the Egyptian Passover (Spinks 2006a, 50, 87) or the paschal candle to the pillar of fire (Jeanes 1998, 19; MacGregor 1992, 165-166).

<sup>31</sup> Stauffer 1994, 11

movement in the Red Sea crossing. This relationship between the design of fonts and the typology of the Red Sea crossing is witnessed by statements such as the following, from Ambrose:

He who passes through the waters of this font—that is, from earthly things to heavenly (for this is the meaning of this passage, this pasch: it is the passage of the person who is baptized; it is a passage from sin to life, from guilt to grace, from vileness to holiness)—he who passes through these waters does not die; he rises again.<sup>32</sup>

The Red Sea crossing is also present as a theme in early Christian art, where it is especially seen in funerary contexts: this would strengthen the threefold association between baptism, death, and the crossing of the Sea.<sup>33</sup>

The Red Sea crossing appears in various early Christian hymns. For instance, in the first of the *Hymns on the Epiphany*, commonly attributed to Ephraem the Syrian, the crossing is referred to alongside several other types:

The cloud overshadowed and kept off the burning heat from the camp—it showed a symbol of the Holy Spirit, which overshadows you in baptism—tempering the flaming fire that it harm not your bodies.

Through the sea the People then passed, and showed a symbol—of the baptism wherein you were washed. The People passed through that and believed not:—the Gentiles were baptized in this and believed and received the Holy Ghost.<sup>34</sup>

The author of the *Hymns on the Epiphany* also uses the Red Sea crossing to establish a number of contrasts:

Moses baptized the People in the midst of the sea, yet availed not—to wash their heart within, that was full of the defilements of misdeeds.

Lo! The priest in the likeness of Moses purges the defilements of the soul—and with oil of anointing, lo! He seals new lambs for the Kingdom.<sup>35</sup>

Different dimensions of the typology are accented in various contexts by different writers. Perhaps especially interesting is the prominence of the defeat of

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<sup>32</sup> Cited in *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Jensen 2012, 22

<sup>34</sup> *Hymns on the Epiphany* 1.5-6

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* 5.7-8. See also 7.6.

Pharaoh within uses of the Red Sea typology in the early Church. That this should be the detail so often brought to the foreground is particularly noteworthy on account of the fact that, in the most explicit use of the Red Sea crossing as a type for baptism in the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 10:1-2, the defeat of Pharaoh is not mentioned at all. Rather, it is union with Moses that is most prominent—‘baptized into Moses.’ Even in writing upon 1 Corinthians 10, the conflict motif, while absent in the text, is often emphasized by early Church commentators.<sup>36</sup>

Cyprian writes of 1 Corinthians 10, accenting themes of exorcism:

And this also is done in the present day, in that the devil is scourged, and burned, and tortured by exorcists, by the human voice, and by divine power; and although he often says that he is going out, and will leave the men of God, yet in that which he says he deceives, and puts in practice what was before done by Pharaoh with the same obstinate and fraudulent deceit. When, however, they come to the water of salvation and to the sanctification of baptism, we ought to know and to trust that there the devil is beaten down, and the man, dedicated to God, is set free by the divine mercy.<sup>37</sup>

Ambrosiaster comments on the same passage:

Under the cloud they were protected from their enemies until they were delivered from death, analogous to baptism. For when they passed through the Red Sea they were delivered from the Egyptians who died in it, and their death prefigured our baptism, which puts our adversaries to death as well.<sup>38</sup>

Didymus the Blind writes:

And also the Red Sea which received the Israelites who did not fear it and delivered them from the evils with which the Egyptians were pursuing them, and the whole history of the going out from Egypt, are the type of the salvation procured by Baptism. Egypt, in fact, is a figure of the world, in which we make our own unhappiness by living evilly; the people are those who are now enlightened; the waters, which are the means of salvation for the people, stand for Baptism; Pharaoh and his soldiers, for Satan and his satellites.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Daniélou assembles several illustrative quotations in 1956, 89-90. This theme is also discussed in Lundberg 1942, 119ff.

<sup>37</sup> Cyprian, *Epistle LXXV*, 15.

<sup>38</sup> Ambrosiaster 2009, 166

<sup>39</sup> Cited in Daniélou 1956, 89-90

Basil of Caesarea also:

What concerns the Exodus of Israel is told us in order to signify those who are saved by Baptism... The sea is the figure of Baptism, since it delivered the people from Pharaoh, as Baptism from the tyranny of the devil. The sea killed the enemy; so in Baptism, our enmity to God is destroyed. The people came out of the sea whole and safe; we also come out of the water as living men from among the dead.<sup>40</sup>

The conflict motif and the defeat of Pharaoh are given a more Christological flavour by some writers. Aphrahat makes the potent comparison: ‘Moses divided the sea for them and had them cross it; our Lord opened hell and broke its gates, when He went down into its depths and opened them and marked out the path for those who come to believe in Him.’<sup>41</sup> Christ has proved victorious over hell and the devil. In the waters of baptism we are following in his footsteps through the rent abyss.<sup>42</sup> This particular articulation of the typology is especially elegant: in baptism we are following in the footsteps of Christ, who divided the waters of Sheol once and for all and has passed through before us. Christ’s death and resurrection is the great parting of the deep and every Christian baptism is a walking of the path that he has made for us, a baptism into him. The advantage of this framing is seen in the way that it maintains the unity of salvation in Christ’s once-for-all act, ensuring that every Christian’s personal baptism is comprehended in this single event, neither adding to nor repeating it.

Maximus of Turin also emphasizes the theme of following in Christ’s path, without mentioning the conflict element:

Christ underwent baptism first, then, so that after Him the Christian people might confidently follow. I understand that this is a mystery, for thus also the pillar of fire went first through the Red Sea so that the children of Israel might follow on a tranquil path, and it went through the waters first in order to prepare the way for those coming after it. What took place, as the Apostle says, was the mystery of baptism.... But the same Christ the Lord who did all these things now goes through baptism before the Christian people in the pillar of His body—He who at

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<sup>40</sup> Cited in *ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Danielou 1956, 94-95. See also Lundberg 1942, 123 and Ferguson 2009, 490.

<sup>42</sup> The themes of descent and ascent, discussed in the previous chapter—see the references to early Church writers there—should be recalled in this present context.

that time went through the sea before the children of Israel in the pillar of fire.<sup>43</sup>

Baptism has both a retrospective and a prospective dimension, invoking themes of death, deliverance, renunciation, remission, and judgment alongside themes of new birth, resurrection, initiation, ordination, adoption, adherence, entrance into the service of a new Master, and being conformed to the pattern of Christ as we follow in his footsteps.<sup>44</sup> It is both baptism *from* and baptism *into*. These two poles of baptismal symbolism have been accorded varying relative weights in different contexts. The shifting of root metaphors from womb to tomb in certain periods,<sup>45</sup> or the Augustinian theological emphasis on original sin, may have led to a muting of the positive dimension of baptism.<sup>46</sup>

Perhaps especially interesting for our purposes is the manner in which uses of Red Sea crossing typology within the tradition have largely fallen on the side of the retrospective, negative dimension of the symbolism. Such an alignment is not as self-evident as it might originally appear. As has already been shown, within Scripture positive dimensions of the crossing's symbolism are often far more apparent: the crossing is associated with entrance, a nuptial washing (Ezekiel 16:9), the birth of the nation, coming under the leadership of Moses, and being formed as a single people (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:2). One possible partial explanation for this is that the positive imagery was more likely to be associated with Jordan crossing typology.

The typology of the Red Sea can be used to highlight contrasts or parallels between the experience of the Church and Israel. Perhaps one of the most startling uses of the typology is found in Ambrose, who uses the typology to argue for the greater antiquity of Christian sacraments over Jewish ones:

Moses took his rod and led the Hebrews, by night in a column of fire, by day in a column of cloud.... The people were in the sea and the column of light went before them; then came the column of cloud; the

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<sup>43</sup> Maximus of Turin, *Sermon 100.3*

<sup>44</sup> Ferguson 2009, 3, 5; Danielou 1960, 171.

<sup>45</sup> Ferguson 2009, 3

<sup>46</sup> Spinks 2006a, 67; Koester & Searle 2004, 173. Kurt Stasiak seeks to recapture the neglected positive dimension of infant baptism by appealing to the motif of adoption (1996, 132ff.), which maintains the negative dimension within a framework in which the accent falls on the positive dimension (169ff.).

shadow, as it were, of the Holy Spirit. You see then that we have in the water and the Holy Spirit the type of baptism.

In the flood, too, baptism was prefigured, and this was certainly before the sacraments of the Jews existed. If, then, the rite of baptism came first, you can see how the Christian sacraments are more ancient than those of the Jews.<sup>47</sup>

## 2.1 Paschal Baptism

The profile enjoyed by Red Sea crossing typology was considerably heightened by the rise of the practice of paschal baptism. While some have hypothesized that a connection between the Red Sea crossing, the resurrection of Christ, and the celebration of baptism arose in part from earlier Jewish and Christian commemorations of the crossing three days after the Egyptian Passover, there is no evidence for the existence of such celebrations.<sup>48</sup> Rather, these connections emerged later, in the course of the gradual development of the Church's calendar. The temporal connection between Easter Sunday, the Red Sea crossing, and the celebration of baptism were developments that followed after the widespread adoption of paschal baptism.<sup>49</sup> Although they most likely did not reflect earlier practice, nor were formative for the celebration of Easter Sunday, the connections between Easter, the Red Sea crossing, and the offering of the first fruits were regarded as having interpretative significance by a number of writers within the fourth century Church and later.<sup>50</sup>

As greater attention was paid to the chronology of Easter and Holy Week, events such as the Red Sea crossing could assume an increased significance, serving as interpretative keys to the New Testament text. With a growing stress upon the apparent typological precursors of Easter Sunday within the calendar,

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<sup>47</sup> Yarnold 1994, 104, 108.

<sup>48</sup> 'Christian authors of late Antiquity associated Easter Sunday with the idea of the crossing of the Red Sea or even imagined that event to have taken place three days after the celebration of the Egyptian Pesah. This is not, however, based on a first (and presumably also second) century celebration – neither in Judaism nor in Christianity.... Before the fourth century, the Pascha was hardly understood as 'transitus' in Christianity. This imagery becomes more important in the wake of the spread of Paschal baptism in that time. The Quartodeciman Pascha as well as Easter Sunday are not related to what became a commemoration of the crossing of the Red Sea in Judaism much later.' Leonhard 2006, 430-431.

<sup>49</sup> Hints of the early development of such connections may be seen in the significance that Origen gives to the third day in relation to the Red Sea crossing (Leonhard 2006, 190).

<sup>50</sup> Leonhard 2006, 191-192

events such as the waving of the ‘omer and the crossing of the Red Sea<sup>51</sup> could assume a prominence that they had not previously enjoyed within Judaism.<sup>52</sup> The chronological relationship between these events brought them, and text and liturgy more generally, into a closer typological correspondence. The correspondence between text and liturgy would be most apparent within the lectionary readings for Easter and Holy week. The use of passages such as Exodus 14 within the context of the paschal vigil would reinforce the sense of this connection.<sup>53</sup>

Talley, who discusses the origin of paschal baptism in detail, claims that the earliest known reference to the practice of paschal baptism is found in Tertullian:<sup>54</sup>

The Passover affords a more than usually solemn day for baptism; when, withal, the Lord’s passion, in which we are baptized, was completed. Nor will it be incongruous to interpret figuratively the fact that, when the Lord was about to celebrate the last Passover, He said to the disciples who were sent to make preparation, “Ye will meet a man bearing water.” He points out the place for celebrating the Passover by the sign of water.... However, every day is the Lord’s; every hour, every time, is apt for baptism: if there is a difference in the solemnity, distinction there is none in the grace.<sup>55</sup>

As Paul Bradshaw points out, we should be clear that Tertullian’s statement does not refer to more than a preference.<sup>56</sup> Hippolytus, whose provenance is uncertain, provides the other early expression of a preference for paschal baptism.<sup>57</sup>

The development of Lent is an important part of this story too. Talley questions the theory that Lent first developed as an extension of the fast of the

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<sup>51</sup> Soggin 2001, 94 observes that the celebration of the crossing of the Red Sea and the Jordan are both attributed to the liturgy of the Gilgal sanctuary in the context of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For the chronological connection between the resurrection and the waving of the ‘omer, see Daise 2007, 27-30.

<sup>52</sup> The landing of the ark on Mount Ararat might also represent another precursor (Genesis 8:4). In light of the fact that the year was generally reckoned with Tishri as the first month prior to the Exodus (cf. Exodus 12:2), most Jewish chronologies placed the landing of the ark on the 17 Nisan, around the time of the offering of the first fruits (Gandz 1953, 258; see Targum Pseudo-Jonathan on Genesis 8:4). Wenham’s chronology of the flood provides the answer to the inconsistencies with the 17 Nisan reckoning that Gandz raises (Wenham 1978, 344-345).

<sup>53</sup> Talley 1986, 49ff. records the use of Exodus 14 in various paschal lectionaries.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. 34ff.

<sup>55</sup> *On Baptism* 19

<sup>56</sup> Johnson 1995, 139

<sup>57</sup> Bradshaw & Johnson 2011, 77

Triduum and Holy Week. He draws attention to the Alexandrian practice of a forty-day post-Epiphany fast for those preparing for baptism and maintains that, through the Council of Nicea, this came to be moved to the period of Lent, as preparation for Easter baptism.<sup>58</sup> Maxwell Johnson argues that the emergence of Lent following Nicea ‘represents a harmonizing and standardizing combination of different, primarily initiatory, practices in early, pre-Nicene Christianity.’<sup>59</sup>

Bradshaw observes that, even after the emergence of paschal baptism, important differences in practice continue to exist. While exclusive paschal baptism seems to be in evidence in northern Italy, baptism also appears to have been celebrated at the time of Pentecost in Rome.<sup>60</sup> The practice of baptism at other feasts and times of the year in certain other regions is also clearly witnessed, not least in the texts of those writing in criticism of this practice.<sup>61</sup> Bradshaw’s conclusion on the practice of paschal baptism is far more guarded:

Prior to the middle of the fourth century preference for paschal baptism seems to have been merely a local custom of the Roman and North African churches, and long before the fourth century drew to a close there is clear evidence that in many parts of the ancient world other festivals in the liturgical years were challenging the exclusive claims of the paschal season—and indeed may always have done so—to say nothing of signs of the continuing acceptance of the legitimacy of baptisms at any time of the year. Whatever the *theory* may have been in some places, therefore, it looks as though baptism at Easter was never the normative *practice* in Christian antiquity that many have assumed.<sup>62</sup>

Even though the practice of exclusive paschal baptism may never have succeeded, the strength of the association between baptism and Pascha is of considerable significance. The particular association of the practice of baptism

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<sup>58</sup> ‘Already established in North Africa and at Rome in the early third century, during the third and fourth centuries paschal baptism became the norm in all of the Church and, with that, the weeks before Pascha were dedicated to the final preparation of the candidates. The six-week duration of that preparation, modeled on the forty-day fast of Jesus, can be understood as Alexandria’s contribution to the post-Nicene patterns.’ Talley 1986, 217.

<sup>59</sup> Johnson 1999, 175. Johnson believes that the harmonized practices included a forty-day post-Epiphany fast, associated with prebaptismal preparation in Alexandria, the three-week fast prior to Easter baptism in Rome and North Africa, and three-week fasts prior to baptism at other times or feasts.

<sup>60</sup> Johnson 1995, 142-143. However, as Bradshaw proceeds to point out, Pentecost was linked to Easter and served as a sort of ‘overflow’, rather than a ‘baptismal season in its own right.’ Ibid. 144.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. 144-145

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. 147



with Pascha implies a shift in the primary paradigm for understanding the sacrament. Bradshaw remarks: ‘As both E.C. Ratcliff and Gabriele Winkler have demonstrated, early Syrian Christianity understood baptism as being a mimesis of the baptism of Christ in the Jordan and made no reference to the idea contained in Romans 6:3-5, of Christians being baptized into the death and resurrection of Christ.’<sup>63</sup> In addition to this, by embedding baptism more firmly in the context of Pascha, it elevates the importance of Red Sea crossing typology.

### ***3. The Red Sea Crossing in the Baptismal Liturgies***

More firmly grounded in a paschal context, baptism would naturally be integrated with the narratives and typology that were already foregrounded within that celebration. This influence would unsurprisingly be especially pronounced at a ritual level: as the practice of baptism was woven into the celebration of Pascha, its rituals would start to explore distinctively paschal themes. As Bryan Spinks suggests, different ritual patterns generate different approaches to theology and exegesis.<sup>64</sup> Paul Bradshaw and Lawrence Hoffman observe that ‘liturgy is essentially symbolic, and ... worshipers are therefore inevitably thrust into symbolic universes that structure time, provide root narratives, and govern self-perception.’<sup>65</sup> The overlapping of the practice of baptism with the celebration of Pascha gave a distinct character to structuring of time, the root narratives, and images in terms of which baptism would be articulated. Despite the extensive common reservoir of baptismal typology that a baptism at Epiphany and a baptism at Easter could draw upon, it should not surprise us the difference in the time of the celebration would lead to a marked difference in the distribution of the weight of emphasis.

A sense of sharing the time of the Passover could be quite pronounced. The *exultet*, the formula with which the paschal candle is blessed, provides a striking example of this:<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid. 140

<sup>64</sup> Spinks 2006a, 47

<sup>65</sup> Bradshaw & Hoffman 1999, 10

<sup>66</sup> Whether the original form of the *exultet* dates from our period is unclear. However, it well illustrates the sense of shared time that could arise through the association of the celebration of Passover and Easter.

For this is the feast of the Pasch, in which that true Lamb is killed and his blood consecrates the doorposts. This is the night in which first you brought our forebears the children of Israel out of Egypt and made them to cross the Red Sea with dry feet. This is the night which cleansed the darkness of sins by the light of the column of fire. This is the night which now separates from the evils of the world and the shadows of sins all who believe in Christ, restores them to grace and unites them to holiness. This is the night in which the bonds of death are broken, and Christ ascends, victorious from the dead.<sup>67</sup>

This fusion of temporal horizons within the context of the liturgy increases the strength of typological identifications and creates a sense of an elevated time of eschatological arrival, without necessarily collapsing the diachronicity of the biblical narrative into a suffocating synchronicity.

Aphrahat also expresses something of this sense of shared time:

Moreover, Israel was baptized in the middle of the sea on Passover night, the day of salvation; likewise, our Saviour washed the feet of his disciples on Passover night, which is the mystery of baptism. For you know, Beloved, that the Saviour gave the true baptism on this night. As long as he travelled about with his disciples, they were baptized in the baptism of the law with which the priests were baptizing, the baptism about which John had said: 'Repent of your sins.' But in that night he disclosed to them the mystery, the baptism of his suffering death, of which the apostle spoke: 'You were buried with him in baptism for death, and you rose with him through the power of God.'<sup>68</sup>

This sense of sharing the time of the Passover would have been strengthened by various scriptural readings over Holy Week and the days following Easter. Gaudentius of Brescia (northern Italy) provides a good example of how Easter initiation could encourage an understanding of 'baptism and eucharist as a Christological recapitulation of the Exodus.'<sup>69</sup> Gaudentius' Easter sermons draw heavily upon Passover imagery, relating it to baptism at various points. In *Tractatus 1*, delivered at the Easter Vigil, he discusses the significance of the Passover, its association with the death of Christ, 'and how both the Passover and the passion it prefigures are perpetuated in baptism.'<sup>70</sup> He speaks of the manner in which the catechumens still have to undergo the drowning of the

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<sup>67</sup> Jeanes 1998, 18. See also MacGregor 1992, 407.

<sup>68</sup> Cited in Spinks 2006a, 52

<sup>69</sup> Keech 2013, 52

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* 25

army of the devil in the waters of baptism.<sup>71</sup> The Sea of Exodus becomes the grave that Christ has opened in his resurrection.<sup>72</sup>

A perfect and blessed exodus is completed in us, when the true Moses has been taken up out of the water of Jordan and the Lord Jesus Christ—God by nature, not only by participation—leads us by the rod of his cross through the water of Baptism from the captivity of that devil Pharaoh, and tears us from every Egypt, which is his darkness; he calls us into the works of light from the darkness of earthly deeds.<sup>73</sup>

Dominic Keech identifies the twofold significance of Passover—as the death of the Lamb (*passio*) and the passage from sin to grace (*transitus*)—noting that Gaudentius synthesizes the two in statements such as the following:

Receive this sacrifice of our Paschal salvation together with us, all of you who quit the power of Egypt and Pharaoh the devil, with all the boldness of a religious heart, so that our innermost parts may be sanctified by the Lord Jesus Christ himself, whom we believe to be in his sacraments.<sup>74</sup>

As paschal baptism brought Passover texts and meaning into close association and proximity to the rituals of baptism, a lively commerce was established between the two, baptismal meanings being read into the events of the Passover and elements of the baptismal rites being explained in terms of the Passover narratives. A good example of this is found in Gaudentius' exhortation: 'Let us also have the sign of the lamb's blood on the surface of our forehead, so that God may not permit the destroyer to come into us.'<sup>75</sup> Here the placing of blood on the doorposts at the first Passover is connected with the preparation of candidates for baptism, where, in a ritual most likely involving a sign of the cross on the forehead, the death of Christ our Passover is presented.<sup>76</sup> At a period later than that focused upon in this present study, the association between the beeswax candle of the Holy Saturday Vigil and the pillar of fire at the Exodus also became

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid. The correlation of the significance of baptism in relation to the Vigil and the deliverance of Israel on the night of the Passover is also drawn by Chromatius' Vigil sermons, for instance (ibid. 26).

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. 41

<sup>73</sup> Cited in ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. 40

<sup>75</sup> Ibid. 29

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

quite elaborated: ‘Just as the Easter candle symbolised the presence of the Lord in the fiery column which led the Israelites through the Red Sea from bondage into a new life, so within a Christian liturgical context in which it was carried before the catechumens to Baptism, the Candle was seen to represent Christ leading the Christian faithful to a new life.’<sup>77</sup> Theodore of Mopsuestia’s *Baptismal Homilies* seem to allude to God’s remembrance of his people in Exodus 3:7-10: ‘God has looked upon your tribulations which you were previously undergoing and had mercy upon you because you were for a long time captives of the tyrant and served a cruel servitude to him.’<sup>78</sup>

I will now reflect briefly upon examples of the integration of Red Sea crossing imagery into baptismal practice, mystagogy, and teaching in the mid to late fourth and early fifth centuries, focusing upon Zeno of Verona, Cyril of Jerusalem, and John Chrysostom.

#### 4. *Baptismal Mystagogy*

Hugh Riley enumerates three things that the mystagogue must keep in mind in performing his task: ‘*first*, the liturgical rite itself, what is said and what is done; *second*, the actual condition of a real group of candidates, their relationship to their environment; *third*, the material which can most adequately explain, given *this* liturgical complex of ceremonies and *this* group of candidates, what these symbolic words and gestures of the initiation rite mean.’<sup>79</sup> The mystagogy of the authors that I will be focusing on here is suffused with a typological consciousness, in which the drama of the biblical narrative provides a backdrop for the initiation for which they are preparing candidates. The purpose of this mystagogy is to reveal in the actions of the liturgy the presence of the ‘saving activity of Christ, hoped for in the *OT*, accomplished once and for all in His sacrifice, and awaiting final revelation in the *Parousia*.’<sup>80</sup>

By the time of the late fourth and early fifth centuries—the time of the figures I am focusing upon here—a shroud of secrecy had descended upon

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<sup>77</sup> MacGregor 1992, 407

<sup>78</sup> Riley 1974, 32

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. 2

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. 39

Christian rites.<sup>81</sup> What could once be spoken of openly with those outside of the faith was now maintained as a guarded mystery. This attitude to the sacraments is evidenced in each of the figures I am studying here.<sup>82</sup> Yarnold suggests that Chrysostom's expression 'the holy and awesome rites of initiation' draws some degree of parallel between Christian rites and those of the Greek mysteries.<sup>83</sup> The secrecy surrounding Christian initiation was not merely upheld on account of the sacred character of the rites, but for pedagogical purposes: the instruction given concerning the rites could have a more potent effect if the priority of the performance of the rites themselves was ensured.<sup>84</sup>

The rites of initiation were often dramatic, visceral, and could address all of the senses, producing a powerful effect upon participants.<sup>85</sup> Zeno, for instance, refers to the smells, the warmth, the sounds, and the sensations of baptism:

Hurry, hurry for a good wash, brothers! The water, living with the Holy Spirit and warmed with the sweetest fire now invites you with its soft murmur. Now the bath attendant is girded up and waiting for you, ready to provide the necessary anointing and washing.<sup>86</sup>

The first stage of the rites of initiation—the renunciation of Satan and profession of personal commitment to Christ—had an especially dramatic cast, with Satan being presented as if personally present, desperately pursuing the candidates like Pharaoh to the font. Cyril describes this in his mystagogical lectures:

First you entered the antechamber of the baptistery and faced toward the west. On the command to stretch out your hand, you renounced Satan as though he were there in person. This moment, you should know, is prefigured in ancient history. When that tyrannous and cruel despot, Pharaoh, was oppressing the noble, free-spirited Hebrew nation, God sent Moses to deliver them from the hard slavery imposed upon them by the Egyptians. The doorposts were anointed with the blood of a lamb that the destroyer might pass over the houses signed with the blood; so the Jews were miraculously liberated. After their liberation the enemy gave chase,

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<sup>81</sup> Yarnold 1994, 55ff.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. 56-57

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. 57

<sup>84</sup> Ibid. 57-59

<sup>85</sup> Jeanes 1995, 220-223

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. 221

and, on seeing the sea part miraculously before them, still continued in hot pursuit, only to be overwhelmed and engulfed in the Red Sea.<sup>87</sup>

Cyril's use of the typology of the Red Sea crossing serves his mystagogical ends in a number of regards.<sup>88</sup> It demonstrates the conformity of Christ's baptism to the saving action of God in the Old Testament. It situates the baptismal candidates within the scope and framework of this larger narrative of deliverance from slavery and assigns roles to the various parties to the contemporary celebration. This typological interpretation of the rite helps the baptismal candidate to understand the meaning of the renunciation of Satan and profession of allegiance to Christ, fleshing out the current ritual with deep theological import.<sup>89</sup> Riley expresses the end served well:

With this type from the *OT*, then, with its notion of bondage and liberation, death and suffering, pursuit to the very edge of liberation, and the power of God, Cyril interprets the *time*: the night journey of the Hebrews with Pharaoh in pursuit—the baptismal vigil with Satan in pursuit of the candidates; the *place*: the journey to the waters of the Red Sea—the arrival in the vestibule of the baptistery, with the font-Red Sea within; the *action*: facing the West and stretching forth the hand in rejection of slavery before passing into the inner chamber, into final freedom through entering the waters of the font-Red Sea, the saving waters of baptism.<sup>90</sup>

The various bodily movements involved in the ritual of renunciation and profession are also assigned meaning: kneeling, for instance, could serve as a symbol of former slavery to Satan.<sup>91</sup>

Red Sea crossing typology is focused upon the defeat of Satan in Cyril, it is in the renunciation that its presence is most powerfully felt.<sup>92</sup> Alexis Doval comments that, for Cyril, 'while the Red Sea is a type prefiguring the font, it is used not so much to illustrate the water's positive effect on the candidates as its destructive effect on the evil one.'<sup>93</sup> Conflict themes are present in the pre-baptismal anointing—an act which strengthens prior to combat—and in the

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<sup>87</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem, *Mystagogical Lectures* 1:2

<sup>88</sup> This typology is also present in Cyril, in somewhat more detail (Riley 1974, 51-52).

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. 46-47

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. 47-48

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. 54ff.

<sup>92</sup> Doval 2001, 163

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

baptism itself. However, the references to the Red Sea crossing do not surface here in Cyril.<sup>94</sup>

By contrast, the positive dimensions of the Red Sea crossing and its relation to baptism are more visible in Chrysostom:

Do you wish to see the symbol? I will show you the baptismal pool in which the man that we were is buried and from which the new man arises. In the Red Sea the Egyptians were drowned but the Israelites arose.<sup>95</sup>

Here it is not only the defeat of Pharaoh/Satan that is emphasized, but also the rising of the Israelites/Christians. Passing ‘through the sea of death’ and partaking in resurrection is also a theme in this quotation:

The Jews saw miracles. Now you shall see greater and much more brilliant ones than those seen when the Jews went forth from Egypt. You did not see the Pharaoh and his armies drowned, but you did see the drowning of the devil and his armies. The Jews passed through the sea; you have passed through the sea of death. They were delivered from the Egyptians; you are set free from the demon. They put aside their servitude to barbarians; you have set aside the far more hazardous servitude to sin.<sup>96</sup>

Likewise, in his commentary on Psalm 47, Chrysostom again lists some of the positive dimensions of the crossing, not merely the defeat of Pharaoh/Satan:

Our victory is greater, however, the drowning not of Egyptians but of the demons, the conquest not of the Pharaoh but of the devil, not the capture of material weapons but the abolition of evil, not in the Red Sea but in the bath of regeneration, not of those entering the promised land but of those moving to a dwelling in heaven, not eating manna but feeding on the Lord's body, drinking not water from the rock but blood from his side.<sup>97</sup>

Within Zeno's paschal sermons, he develops the imagery of the Red Sea crossing further, bringing in the figure of Miriam: ‘Miriam who beats her tambourine with the women is the type of the Church who with all the churches she has borne sings a hymn and beats the true tambourine of her breast as she

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<sup>94</sup> Riley 1974, 111ff.

<sup>95</sup> Cited in Doval 2001, 164

<sup>96</sup> *Stavronikita* 3:24

<sup>97</sup> Chrysostom 1998, 300

leads the Christian people not into the desert but to heaven.’<sup>98</sup> The most startling aspect of Zeno’s sermons, however, is the sharp opposition that he seeks to maintain between the type and the reality, often revealing a vehement anti-Judaism.<sup>99</sup> Zeno’s attention often moves to the contrasts between the accounts—which highlight the superiority of the Christian reality—rather than the parallels. For instance, as R. Hillier comments: ‘According to Zeno ... the truth leaves allegory far behind. The Red Sea was no real baptism at all, for the Israelites did not pass through the water.’<sup>100</sup>

A further noteworthy and unique characteristic of Zeno is his preaching of sermons upon the various readings of the Vigil service.<sup>101</sup> A few of the principal readings of the Vigil service included themes of Passover and/or the Red Sea crossing: Exodus 12, Exodus 14 (possibly followed by the Song of Miriam), and Psalm 79.<sup>102</sup> These Scripture readings helped to perform the mystagogical task. Zeno’s sermons upon them further demonstrate their significance.

In Cyril, Chrysostom, and Zeno, we see three differing yet related ways of bringing the biblical typology of the Red Sea crossing into illuminating dialogue with the Church’s practice of paschal baptism.

### ***5. Typology and Mysteriological Piety***

In our account of the liturgy of the late fourth and early fifth centuries we must beware of the danger of attending only to the formal aspect of the liturgy, without also reflecting upon the sort of piety that received it. The official and formal elements of doctrine and cult will be experienced and appropriated in distinctive ways by people of different times and ages. In *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, Schmemmann observes: ‘A “coefficient of refraction” determines the “piety” or “religious sense” of the period, and this in turn affects the further development of the religion itself in its objective content.’<sup>103</sup> He cautions:

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<sup>98</sup> Jeanes 1995, 96

<sup>99</sup> By contrast, for instance, see Chrysostom’s remarks on 1 Corinthians 10:1-5 in *Homily 23* of his 1 Corinthians homilies, where he observes the close correspondence of the type and reality.

<sup>100</sup> Jeanes 1995, 121

<sup>101</sup> Ibid. 198-199

<sup>102</sup> Ibid. 151

<sup>103</sup> Schmemmann 1966, 97



This means that piety can accept the cult in a “key” other than that in which it was conceived and expressed as text, ceremony or “rite.” Liturgical piety has the strange power of “transposing” texts or ceremonies, of attaching a meaning to them which is not their plain or original meaning.<sup>104</sup>

Consequently, it is imperative that, in studying liturgy in its historical context, we also give attention to the factor of piety.

Yarnold suggests that, while the rites of Christian initiation were not themselves heavily influenced by the pagan mysteries, the explanations given of them were, as emphasis came to be placed on mystery, fear, and their awe-inspiring character.<sup>105</sup> Yarnold conjectures that the personal influence of Constantine might have been partially responsible for this development, as Constantine’s prior Sun-worship provided an implicit model of religion to which Christianity was conformed.<sup>106</sup> These elements of mystery religion first seem to have taken root in Jerusalem:

It was at Jerusalem that the veneration of the Christian sacred objects (the cross, Calvary, the tomb) began and apparently the practice of mystagogic catechesis began here too. Cyril applied to his sermons the name *mystagogia*, with all its pagan associations.<sup>107</sup>

Schmemmann suggests that the post-Constantinian situation put the Church in the challenging position of having to incorporate society into its life, ‘not just in an external sense, but also internally.’<sup>108</sup> For paganism, especially among the general populace, ‘religion and cult were identical concepts.’<sup>109</sup> As Christianity displaced paganism, it somehow had to fill this vacuum.

Mysteriological piety is characterized by a ‘faith in cult, in its saving and sanctifying power.’<sup>110</sup> The cult, which dramatically re-enacts a myth, takes priority over the myth: ‘the myth is defined by the cult and grows out of it.’<sup>111</sup> By

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid. 98

<sup>105</sup> Yarnold 1994, 66

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Schmemmann 1966, 111

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. 106

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

contrast, within Christianity, it is *history* that takes priority and cult is worthless without it: if Christ has not been raised, our cult is in vain.<sup>112</sup> While mystery cults presented a saving *cult*, Christianity presented a saving *faith*:

[I]n Christianity the cult establishes the reality of the Church. Its purpose is not the individual sanctification of its members, but the creation of the people of God as the Body of Christ, the manifestation of the Church as new life in the New Aeon.<sup>113</sup>

The mystery cult was the dramatic re-enactment of its myth: it was through this repetition that the drama became efficacious and saving.<sup>114</sup> The contrast between this and Christian cult is stark, but easily forgotten: Christian cult does not save by making the redemptive myth present by re-enacting it. 'In Baptism Christ does not die and rise again, which would be its essence if it were a mystery, but the believer actualizes his faith in Christ, and in the Church, as Salvation and New Life.'<sup>115</sup> When we are baptized in the likeness of Christ's death, we are personally entering into the enduring efficacy of Christ's once-for-all death and resurrection, not cultically re-enacting or dramatically portraying those events to make them present, as if Christ died and rose again in every baptism.<sup>116</sup> The efficacy of this historical event is manifested, but the event itself is not reproduced.

Mysteriological piety operates according to the principle of sanctification, establishing a distinction between the sacred and the profane and conferring sacred status upon the profane through its ceremonies and rituals.<sup>117</sup> Christian cult was eschatological, manifesting and actualizing the *Church's* entrance into the new creation. The mystery cult, by contrast, was not the action of the Church, by which its eschatological character in Christ was manifested, but was a mysterious, awe-inspiring, and sacred rite by which the clergy sanctified detached individuals.<sup>118</sup> In such a manner, the clergy were separated from the people and cult eclipsed Church.

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid. 107

<sup>113</sup> Ibid. 107-108

<sup>114</sup> Ibid. 108

<sup>115</sup> Ibid. 109

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid. 126

<sup>118</sup> Ibid. 127-129

Schmemmann argues that mysteriological piety's impact upon Christianity, abetted by the concurrent influence of the Imperial court ceremonial, is evidenced in a number of developments. Church buildings started to be understood as sacred—and sanctifying—places and certain holy sites started to attract cults to them.<sup>119</sup> However, the most significant of the developments, for our current purposes, relates to the complication of the external ceremony and ritual of worship.<sup>120</sup> This established an 'external solemnity' which 'consists in the sacralisation of sacred ceremonies and actions, in emphasizing that they are not "simple," in building around them an atmosphere of sacred and religious fear.'<sup>121</sup>

The Church never entirely succumbed to mysteriological piety. However, its influence upon the Church's practice was extensive and profound. Much of this influence can be seen in the extensive symbolism and ritual of fourth and fifth century baptismal liturgies. The fundamental simplicity of baptism was jeopardized by the multiplication and elevation of attendant rites, vested with increasingly elaborate symbolism. An 'awe-inspiring ritual' demanded a degree of external drama that baptism itself—which is definitely not without dramatic elements—could not provide, unless embellished with increasingly complex prescribed rituals of exorcism and preparation (for instance, Augustine's ritual of the goat's fleece<sup>122</sup>) and many other accompanying initiatory rituals, each with its own peculiar symbolism.<sup>123</sup>

The rise of the perception of the Christian cult as 'sanctifying' also encouraged an individualization of the meaning of initiation. Such individualization is already in evidence in much of the exegesis of the allegorists, for whom, rather than providing a figure of an *ecclesial* and *eschatological* event, as it does in the New Testament, the Exodus and the Sea crossing becomes a symbol of the *individual's* passage into spiritual enlightenment.

Despite its influence, mysteriological piety was never, as I have already noted, entirely accommodated by the early Church. Even within the writings of those who were influenced by it, we still encounter practices and thinking that run against its grain. For instance, Zeno's description of the efficacy of baptism is

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid. 113-118

<sup>120</sup> Ibid. 92

<sup>121</sup> Ibid. 120

<sup>122</sup> Yarnold 1994, 10-11

<sup>123</sup> Ibid. 17-54

robustly ‘font-centred’ and his baptismal rite is relatively simple, in contrast to the magnificent rite of such as Ambrose.<sup>124</sup> The subsidiary rites derive their significance and efficacy from the central rite, ritually unpacking its significance, rather than dividing the efficacy of the central rite of baptism among themselves.<sup>125</sup> Zeno also resists the de-eschatologization of baptism and the subordination of myth to cult:

The events of the Old Testament dispensation, for example the institution of the Passover and the crossing of the Red Sea, are treated as typologically looking forward to the Christian sacraments of baptism and Eucharist, though this by no means reduces their nature and importance as historical events. Each and every baptism and Eucharist derives from the supreme historical event, the first Easter Day, and looks forward to the final historical event of fulfilment in heaven.<sup>126</sup>

In Zeno, the individual administration of the sacrament is also still coloured by a strong ‘corporate sense of baptism’.<sup>127</sup>

## *6. Assessment*

In concluding this chapter, I want to offer some remarks upon some points that emerge from this brief survey.

First, Red Sea crossing typology can be expressed in many aspects of the liturgy. Beyond the readings, homilies, and prayers of the liturgy—the places where we might most expect to encounter it—I have presented examples of the association of the Red Sea crossing with baptism through the Church year, its connection with a night vigil, art and iconography, hymns, the design of baptismal fonts, specific bodily movements of the baptismal ritual, and through the significance given to secondary rituals, such as that of the Easter candle. The result was often a rich and ‘immersive’ incarnation of Scripture in a ritual form.

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<sup>124</sup> Jeanes 1995, 158, 213

<sup>125</sup> Ibid. 159. The proliferation of attendant rites remains a problem, to my mind, even when a ‘font-centred’ mystagogy offers a measure of damage limitation. The problematic character of this development becomes more pronounced when the extraneous rites remain intact—sometimes even becoming autonomous rites from baptism, as in the case of confirmation—while the central baptismal act of descent into and immersion in a font was replaced by the minimalistic practice of aspersion.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid. 227

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

Second, the typology is held in a close relationship with the actual form and performance of the ritual. Rather than functioning as an explanation of what baptism means that can be detached from the shape and reality of its practice, the typology is integral to and woven into the drama of the ritual itself, illuminating what is taking place.<sup>128</sup> Scripture is of a piece with the liturgy.

Third, Red Sea crossing baptismal typology was not a single interpretation but the wellspring of a large and variegated family of readings. Within the fundamental association of baptism with the Red Sea crossing a wide range of readings were possible. Different details or dimensions of the typology could be brought to the foreground. In some accounts, it was the pursuit of Satan and his defeat in the waters of baptism that was emphasized. In others, the dying and rising again of the baptismal candidates is more accented. Many uses of the typology were maximalist and expansive, identifying parallels with every detail of the type—the rod, the pillar of cloud, the Egyptians, Pharaoh, Moses, etc.—while others only explored one aspect of the imagery. This variation often reflected the discretion of mystagogues and the fact that the antitype was generally not the doctrine of baptism in the abstract, but rituals of baptism being performed at particular times and places, and upon particular persons.

Fourth, within the early Church it is the retrospective dimension of the Red Sea crossing typology that receives the most attention. Pharaoh and the Egyptians represent Satan and his demons—or the world and the passions—in pursuit of the baptismal candidate to the waters of the font, wherein they are drowned. The positive dimensions of baptism tended to be accented by appeal to different typology or biblical background, such as the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, the Jordan crossing under Joshua, or re-entry into Paradise.

Fifth, on account of this focus upon the retrospective and negative dimension of the typology, prospective and positive dimensions of the typology are under-explored in the early Church. As there are typologies that, *prima facie*, are more promising for accenting many of the prospective and positive dimensions of baptism, this is not entirely surprising. However, as the New Testament seems to dwell more upon positive dimensions of the typology, this might be a missed opportunity. In 1 Corinthians 10:1-2, it is corporate union with

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<sup>128</sup> Koester & Searle 2004, 135

and incorporation into Moses that is highlighted. In Hebrews 13:20-21 (cf. Isaiah 63:11-14) we encounter themes of resurrection and Christ as the Shepherd of the Church, and perhaps also the implied theme—when read against the background of Isaiah 63—of the gift of the Holy Spirit. In Isaiah 63 there are themes of new creation. In the Exodus narrative itself there are extensive allusions to new birth in association with the crossing. All of these are prominent dimensions of baptismal imagery for the early Church. On account of the emphasis upon the pursuit of Pharaoh and his defeat at the Sea, however, facets of the Exodus story and, consequently, of its baptismal theology are underdeveloped.<sup>129</sup>

Sixth, in the uses of the account of the Red Sea crossing in relation to baptism we can witness many different approaches to typological exegesis in action. The Philonic excesses of the Alexandrians often produced an individualistic allegorical reading of the Exodus account and threatened to overwhelm the original account. On the other hand, the restraint of an Antiochan exegete such as Theodore of Mopsuestia did not prevent him from exploring the typology of the crossing, while showing a greater concern for maintaining the integrity of the Old Testament pole of the typological relation. Zeno of Verona is an example of one who accents an opposition between type and antitype, while others bring them into closer alignment.

Seventh, in the various ways that the Red Sea typology is taught and enacted in the early Church we can see evidence of appreciation that the typological relation is not sufficient of itself. It is necessary for Christian teachers to train their hearers in the appropriate manner in which to perceive this relation. Within this teaching a clear distinction needed to be maintained between type and antitype. The *difference* between type and antitype is crucial to the illuminating character of the relation and is consequently foregrounded in much teaching. Reading the Old Testament texts in a figural fashion, discovering Christ and his Church within them, requires training in ways of allowing the figure to guide our attention to the reality. Through this training, the Church is taught to locate its own story within the temporal movement discovered within the witness of Scripture.

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<sup>129</sup> The attention given to corporate elements in the New Testament uses of Red Sea crossing typology might have served to counteract some of the individualizing tendencies of later theologians.

Finally, the understanding and practice of baptism and of its typology was coloured and shaped by the detrimental influence of mysteriological piety. This encouraged a dulling of the sense of history, eschatology, and the distinctively temporal character of the Christian mode of participation. It also involved the partial displacing of an epiphanic cult—within which the Church actualized its eschatological existence—with a sanctifying cult, detached from the Church's corporate existence, which transmitted sacredness to individual initiates in a de-eschatologized fashion. Mysteriological piety prompted the proliferation of subsidiary rites and symbolisms, calculated to cultivate a sense of awe and mystery through a sacred ritual drama. Through all of this, the essential simplicity and internal force of the ritual of baptism was at risk of being overwhelmed by external pomp and ceremony.

# 8

## UP OUT OF THE SEA

### Pastoral Liturgy in a Secular Age

#### *1. Liturgy in a Secular Age*

Christianity faces a crisis of liturgical piety in the contemporary West, much as it did in the fourth and fifth centuries. Where once the influx of new converts and the Church's burgeoning influence created the conditions for the spread of mysteriological piety, the liturgy is now stranded on the naked shingles of Dover Beach, speaking in a tongue alien to those of our secular age.

Even where the form of the liturgy has remained constant, its traction in our culture's imagination has been severely diminished. The Church's practice of the liturgy can become akin to a living museum: on the surface everything looks to be in its right place, yet beneath this veneer lies a stark disconnect. It is not uncommon to hear traditional liturgies declared to be 'dead', yet, as Mark Searle notes, the performance of such liturgies often 'merely reflect the life of our times: anonymous, private, functional, and individualistic.'<sup>1</sup> Attempts at resistance can involve the cultivation of the informality and friendliness of an ersatz community or the elevated feelings of the emotional worship event, promising a raw authenticity or the buzz and excitement of the 'event'.<sup>2</sup> Yet neither of these approaches addresses our deeper malaise:

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<sup>1</sup> Koester & Searle 2004, 193

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



We take part because we choose to do so, and we choose to do so because we like it, or it makes us feel good about ourselves, or because we enjoy praying and singing with others. It gives an evanescent experience of togetherness, a passing *frisson* of religious excitement, but it doesn't impose the constraints of discipline and commitment. It merely satisfies some obscurely felt need for the time being but will have to be fresh and different and exciting every time if it is to keep drawing us back.<sup>3</sup>

Various movements of liturgical renewal have foundered. These movements have often been propelled by the conviction that 'revision of the images presented in the liturgy'—placing a greater emphasis upon such things as congregational participation—will be the solution to the disconnect that people experience.<sup>4</sup> Searle comments that, in all of the focus upon the *images* of liturgy, the *imagination* that encounters the liturgy has been neglected:

[T]he imagination itself was never made the subject of conscious and critical reflection, and this may be part of the reason why, after all the changes that have occurred, the expected renewal of Church life has come to something of a stalemate.... The imagination is not what we see or think: it is rather the lens through which we see, the very patterns within which we think.<sup>5</sup>

Over the last couple of decades there has also been rising interest in liturgy and more liturgical traditions in evangelical circles.<sup>6</sup> The power of liturgy to shape and transform us is a prominent theme in the recent work of widely read evangelical thinkers such as James K.A. Smith. Yet, amidst glowing encomia to liturgy, there is peculiar inattention to the question of why, if liturgy is indeed so transformative, existing liturgical traditions do not generally appear to be bursting with the promised spiritual vitality.<sup>7</sup> In order to address this troubling issue, I believe that we must heed Searle's counsel and attend to the imagination.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 194

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 128

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 127

<sup>6</sup> E.g. Galli 2008; Webber 2012; Smith 2009; Smith 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Smith does have some helpful remarks, qualifying his broader claims, in Smith 2013, 186ff. However, these issues merit much closer and more central attention than can be provided in the space he grants them.

The imagination arises from embodied practices. However, the imagination is also something that we *bring to* our practices.<sup>8</sup> As Smith observes, the imagination is a synthesizing function that begins from and lives off images, rituals, and stories absorbed through our bodies.<sup>9</sup> The challenge that Christian liturgy faces in contemporary society is that the imaginations it encounters have undergone and are undergoing rigorous formation into ways of seeing and acting that are quite contrary to the world it projects. Even when the necessity of rehabilitation is appreciated, we need to be able to ensure a minimal level of appropriate engagement with the liturgy to initiate this process. That the liturgy will, with sufficient repetition, bring the imagination around to an appropriate understanding is not self-evidently the case. Would not empirical evidence suggest that, with an imagination lacking the appropriate modes and postures of receptivity to its images, the practice of the liturgy can fail to exert its intended transformative power, indeed that it might become a process of *malformation*? Repetition of liturgy may not be able to counteract the effect of a misguided liturgical piety by itself.

I believe that Charles Taylor's discussion of the prevailing 'social imaginary' in *A Secular Age* helps us to identify some of the reasons why the traditional liturgy of the Church can fail to find purchase in our modern imaginations.<sup>10</sup> Here I will explore how a few of the dimensions of the current social imaginary that feature in Taylor's analysis conspire to produce a misshapen liturgical piety.

### 1.1 The Buffered Self

The 'buffered self' is the modern form of the subject, with a sharp boundary or 'buffer' between the internal self and that which lies without. The buffered self is the master of its own meanings and the self can disengage from its natural and social surroundings.<sup>11</sup> By contrast, the 'porous self' of earlier ages is vulnerable and open to the 'enchanted' natural and social world within which it is

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<sup>8</sup> Searle remarks that Scripture and liturgy do not 'merely form the religious imagination, but are themselves filtered through it and are understood accordingly.' Koester & Searle 1994, 115.

<sup>9</sup> Smith 2013, 17

<sup>10</sup> Taylor 2007

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. 38, 42

situated.<sup>12</sup> Meaning for the porous self is located in the world in which it is a participant.

This buffering of the self makes it harder for us to practice and experience the liturgy as a *common* and *collective* rite. The socio-symbolic character of the sacraments' efficacy, which I have discussed in detail within this thesis, is not so naturally understood or experienced by the buffered self. When this self participates in traditional liturgy, its 'meaning' is perceived to occur in the privacy of the mind, rather than in the external socio-symbolic realm. Society and the Church will be experienced as 'a conglomeration of autonomous individuals rather than ... as products of a historical community.'<sup>13</sup>

## 1.2 The Age of Authenticity

Taylor's age of authenticity is characterized by an 'expressive individualism,' for which each of us must personally discover and live out our own chosen and authentic form of identity.<sup>14</sup> In the age of authenticity the realm of common action is substituted by a space of 'mutual display'.<sup>15</sup> I express my identity in such spaces—by the way that I dress, act, speak, and affiliate with others—displaying my personal style and choice to others and responding to theirs. This realm of mutual display is readily colonized by corporations, who offer us distinct images, styles, and brands with which we can identify ourselves. Taylor observes that, as these spaces 'hover between solitude and togetherness, they may sometimes flip over into common action.'<sup>16</sup> Such moments can be encountered in sporting events, rock concerts, or other such times when, as individuals, we are all touched together and so, for a period of fleeting duration, become as one.

For many evangelicals, for instance, the return to traditional liturgy has been driven by a need created by expressive individualism. Plagued by a gnawing sense of inauthenticity, many evangelicals in quest of traditional liturgy can be like the stereotypical hipster who seeks out 'honest' and 'authentic' vintage styles in the thrift store. Traditional liturgy can become yet another element within the

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid. 39

<sup>13</sup> Koester & Searle 1994, 190

<sup>14</sup> Smith 2014, 85

<sup>15</sup> Taylor 2007, 481

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. 482

culture of mutual display, a lifestyle choice, or something that we consume, to display our personal taste and liturgical refinement, our aesthetics, socio-economic class, and ecclesiastical pedigree. The truly common action of the liturgy may be substituted for by attempts to create those brief moments of group fusion in an emotional event.

### **1.3 Autonomous Art**

Taylor describes the manner in which music, poetry, and other objects of human creation have become removed from the contexts and origins to which they once belonged and recontextualized as ‘art’.<sup>17</sup> Our feeling of being moved by art is thus detached from the art’s proper object and becomes a pure aesthetic experience, freed from the object for which it was originally created to evoke a response.<sup>18</sup> This affords an ersatz sense of transcendence, where the possibility of actual transcendence has been denied.

This new concept of autonomous art can shape our experience of the art of the liturgy. Having detached art from its object in our consciousness, we are at risk of experiencing the liturgy as an aesthetic spectacle, a beautiful evocation of feelings of transcendence, yet feelings divorced from genuine Christian contemplation and action.

### **1.4 The Secular Experience of Time**

The modern imagination has an altered form of time-consciousness. Premodern time was not just the steady ticking of an impersonal clock—the ‘homogeneous, empty time’ of modernity.<sup>19</sup> Taylor remarks upon the way in which ‘higher times’ could ‘gather, assemble, reorder, and punctuate’ ordinary time.<sup>20</sup> He observes that ‘events which were far apart in profane time could nevertheless be closely linked,’ presenting the ‘prefiguring-fulfilling’ relation in which Old and New Testament events were placed as an example of this higher time.<sup>21</sup> He writes:

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<sup>17</sup> Smith 2014, 74-75

<sup>18</sup> Taylor gives the example of playing masses in concerts (Taylor 2007, 355).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. 54

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

Good Friday 1998 is closer in a way to the original day of the Crucifixion than mid-summer's day 1997. Once events are situated in relation to more than one kind of time, the issue of time-placing becomes quite transformed.<sup>22</sup>

The effect that the loss of this will have upon a faith that has typological realism at its heart is immense. The decay of a sense of the permeability of events and persons to each other—through the medium of time—will make it difficult for us to grasp the typology inherent in the Scripture and the sacraments.

## 2. Conclusion

Over thirty years ago now, Mark Searle spoke of the need for the development of a third branch of liturgical studies, alongside historical research and the study of the theology of the liturgy.<sup>23</sup> The new branch of liturgical studies that Searle envisioned he termed 'pastoral liturgical studies'. Gilbert Ostdiek describes its purpose:

This new discipline will have three tasks. First, its *empirical task* is "to attend to what actually goes on in the rite" and to describe what is happening. Second, the *hermeneutical task* is to study "how symbols operate and how symbolic language communicates." Third, the *critical task* is to compare the previous two sets of findings "with the historical tradition and with the theological claims made for the liturgy" and to draw appropriate theological and pastoral conclusions.<sup>24</sup>

One of the central concerns of this discipline is to discover and address the areas of mismatch between the 'imaginative world projected by the liturgy with the imaginative world out of which [contemporary persons] operate.'<sup>25</sup>

In this thesis I have ventured into this field. I began by discussing the way in which the symbols of the liturgy operate. I proceeded to demonstrate the typological character of the Scriptures, the way in which Exodus typology illuminates Christian existence, and how the Red Sea crossing in particular relates to baptism. I explored the integration of Scripture and sacrament and the manner in which the former conscripts the body through the latter. I presented the

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Koester & Searle 1994, 101ff.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. 101

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. 115-116

sacraments as the means by which we are set apart as the heirs and executors of the new covenant. I studied historical examples of the liturgical use of Red Sea crossing typology in the early Church. I also reflected upon the use of typology as a mystagogical tool.

Over the course of my thesis I have spoken of a number of breaches: 1. The breach between the form of baptism and its explanation (Schmemmann); 2. The breach between baptism and biblical typology (Daniélou); 3. The breach between Old and New Testaments; 4. The breach between our imaginations and the world of the Scripture; 5. The breach between us and the world of the liturgy. I have presented a liturgically embedded scriptural typology as a means of overcoming each one of these breaches.

I believe that a recovery of such a liturgically embedded typology also gives us invaluable tools for addressing the mismatch between the imagination of a secular age and the imaginative world projected by Scripture and the liturgy. Typology, as I have presented it, is a means of bringing two distinct poles into union: Old Testament and New Testament, biblical narrative and bodily ritual, text and world, word and sacrament, Scripture and Church. Typology achieves this union by acting upon both poles in these relations, rather than upon one alone. The lines of typology are the connections between worlds, lines from which great bridges can steadily be formed, upon which a lively traffic of meaning can occur.

Consequently, the resources provided by typology are among the most promising means of addressing the disconnect between modern persons and traditional liturgy. Typology comes to the modern person where they are and guides them, through the sacraments and liturgy, into the world of the Scripture, forging their identity in the enduring typological relationship between text and body. It strengthens the bond between Word and Sacrament, giving new dynamism and depth of symbolism to liturgy and ritual and manifesting the powerful presence of the Scriptures. An epiphanic scriptural liturgy discloses both the reality of God's redemptive drama and our part within it. It is through typology that we will be best equipped for the challenging task of liturgical catechesis, the task of ushering persons into the world of the Scriptures through the liturgy, embedding them firmly within the matrix of the theo-drama, singing

them into the symphony of the Spirit. This task may never before have pressed itself upon the Church with greater, though widely unrealized, urgency.

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